Dynamics of Mobilization and Radicalization of the Kurdish Movement in the 1970s in Turkey

by

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for any award or any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution. It is affirmed by the candidate that, to the best of his knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed **Harun Ercan**

Abstract

This study aims to delineate causes behind the emergence and development of the Kurdish movement in Turkey with a special focus on the dynamics which led to the ideological and strategic-tactical radicalization of the Kurdish movement in the 1970s. While this study relies on the theoretical framework proposed by the contentious politics scholarship, methodologically, mechanism-process approach is pursued in order to grasp how interactions among multiple actors determined the flow of the movement from late 1950s to early 1980s. The significance of this study is twofold. On the one hand, a heavily understudied epoch of the Kurdish movement in Turkey is visited in order to configure what actually happened in the 1970s. On the other hand, this study shows that radicalization of the Kurdish movement happened in the 1970s as a counter argument against the mainstream understanding of the history of the Kurdish movement which presumes the PKK's beginning of guerilla warfare (1984) as a rupture. Primary sources used in this study are in-depth interviews with Kurdish revolutionaries of the 1970s, political magazines of movement organizations and court proceedings of Diyarbakır Military Court-Martial.

Keywords: Social Movements, Political Violence, Kurdish movement in Turkey, Armed
Struggle, PKK

Özet

Bu tezin amacı, Türkiye'deki Kürt hareketinin ortaya çıkışını ve gelişimini, 1970'lerde yaşanan ideolojik ve stratejik-taktiksel radikalleşmeye odaklanarak ele almaktadır. Bu çalışma, çatışmalı politikalar literatürü tarafından ortaya konan teorik çerçeveye yaslanırken, yöntemsel olarak mekanizma-süreç yaklaşımını izleyerek 1950-1980 sürecinde çoklu aktörler arasındaki siyasi etkileşimlerin Kürt hareketinin seyrine etki etme biçimlerini konu edinmektedir. Bu çalışmanın önemi iki noktada ele alınabilir. Bu çalışma bir taraftan, 1970'ler sürecinde Türkiye'deki Kürt hareketinin siyasi-toplumsal dönüşümlerini inceleyerek akademik çalışmalarda nadiren konu edilen bir dönemi analiz etmektedir. Diğer yandan, bu çalışma 1984 yılında başlayan gerilla mücadelesini bir kopuş olarak gören hakim anlayışın aksine Kürt hareketinin radikalleşmesini 1970'ler sürecinde gerçekleştiğini göstermektedir. Bu tez için kullanılan birincil kaynaklar arasında 1970'lerin Kürt devrimcileri ile yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler, örgütlerin siyasi dergi ve materyalleri ile Diyarbakır Askeri Sıkıyönetim Mahkemesi dava tutanakları yer almaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Toplumsal Hareketler, Politik Şiddet, Türkiye'de Kürt Hareketi, Silahlı Mücadele, PKK

To Zeki Yıldız..

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List of Abbreviations

AD-YÖD [Ankara Devrimci Yüksek Öğrenim Derneği]: Ankara's Revolutionary Students Association
AP [Adalet Partisi]: Justice Party
ASK-DER [Anti-Sömürgeci Kültür Dernekleri]: Anti-Colonial Culture Associations.
DDKD [Devrimci Demokratik Kültür Derneği]: Revolutionary Democratic Culture Association.
DDKAD [Devrimci Demokrat Kadınlar]: Revolutionary Democratic Associations of Women
DDKO [Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları]: Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearts.
DHKD [Devrimci Halk Kültür Dernekleri]: Revolutionary People's Cultural Associations.
DİSK [Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Federasyonu]: Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions
FKF [Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu]: Federation of Thought Clubs
KDP [Partîya Demokrata Kurdistan] : Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)
KİP [Kürdistan İşçi Partisi]: Kurdistan Workers' Party. *This name was originally belonging to the follower of the T-KDP (KİP-DDKD) but PKK took the Kurdish translation of this name.*
KUK [Kürdistan Ulusal Kurtuluşçuları]: Kurdistan National Liberators.
KYB [Yekîtîya Niştimanîya Kurdistan]: Union of Kurdistan Patriots
MHP [Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi]: Nationalist Action Party.
NUC [Milli Birlik Komitesi]: National Unity Council
NSP [Milli Selamet Partisi]: Natıonal Salvation Party
MC [Milliyetçi Cephe Koalisyon Hükümeti]: National Front Coalıtion Government
MTTB [Milliyetçi Türk Talebe Birliği]: National Turkish Students Union
PKK [Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan]: Kurdistan Workers' Party.
RPP [Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi]: Republican People's Party
SMO: Social Movement Organizations.
TİP (Türkiye İşçi Partisi]: Worker's Party of Turkey.
TÖB-DER (Tüm Öğretmenler Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği]: Solidarity and Unification Association of All Teachers
TKDP [Türkiye-Kürdistanı Demokrat Partisi]: Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey.
T-KDP [Türkiye'de Kürdistan Demokrat Partisi]: Kurdistan Democratic Party in Turkey
TKSP [Türkiye Kürdistanı Sosyalist Partisi]: Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey.
THKP-C [Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Partisi-Cephesi]: Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front
YTP [Yeni Türkiye Partisi]: The Party of New Turkey

INTRODUCTION

The 1968 Revolution marked a great wave of contentions over various parts of the world. With the amalgamation of socialist and national liberationist ideological frames in the 1960s and 1970s, the main aim for most of the movements, which emerged in the Third World and/or previously colonized lands, was to seize the state power via revolutions. The reflections of this contentious episode on the Kurds in Turkey surfaced in the 1970s, with a similar ideological framing that combined a socialist perspective with the idea of national liberation to form an independent Kurdish state. Nevertheless, systematic repression of Turkish state could neither dismantle the Kurdish movement in the 1970s nor offer a relatively democratic regime in upcoming decades in which demands of the Kurds for state power would be softened and integrated to the rule of the Turkish nation-state. The history of the Kurds in Turkey verifies that what Turkish state actually achieved with systematic repression was merely a temporal deferral of the demands posed by the 1970s of Kurdish movement which pushed Kurds to employ more radical ways of struggle in the 1980s and 1990s. Finally, in the 1980s, the Kurds in Turkey formed one of the largest guerilla movements in the world and this contention is still going on after the emergence of a war in the 1990s, between the Kurdish movement and the Turkish state.

Although the organizational and ideological continuity of the Kurdish movement from the 1970s to 1980s is visible, surprisingly, a few number of studies produced on the Kurdish movement in Turkey have generally focused on the 1990s which has been the most contentious episode in the history of the Kurdish movement. This domination is mainly due to the increased salience of the Kurdish

question in Turkey after the devastating consequences of the armed conflict which became escalated in the 1990s. The results of this conflict can be indicated as; more than 37,000 deaths in the ongoing war (Bozarslan, 2001), and thousands of partly or completely destroyed villages and hamlets, and the consequent forced migration of millions of people. In relation to this, with a special focus on the PKK, the 1970s of Kurdish movement is generally mentioned just because the Kurdish movement organizations emerged in the 1970s. However, neither the PKK of the 1970s nor the other political parties in the Kurdish movement were taken into account as an academic object yet.

In the beginning phase of this study, the hypothesis that fueled inspiration for such a study was the following one: "The protestors use violent means only after they have attempted other nonviolent means of seeking redress for their grievances" (Oberschall, 1995: 164). Although the idea of focusing on the nonviolent history of the Kurdish movement created the initial motivation for this study, the hypothesis above did not limit the scope of this study with the nonviolent history of the Kurdish movement in Turkey. Rather, the main purpose of this study became to grasp the causes behind transition from employing nonviolent methods of struggle to the armed struggle in order to focus on the transformation per se. On that point, regarding the serious gap in the literature linking the 1970s with the latter periods, the necessary question is as follows: "What kind of analytical conundrums emerge as a consequence of neglecting the 1970s of the Kurdish movement?"

In case of disregarding the continuity on how the 1960s-1970s affected 1980s-1990s of the Kurdish movement, one would miss the chance of understanding *how* and *why* the ideological framing of the movement evolved from socialist ideals towards ethnicization and from peaceful demonstrations towards the advocacy of

armed struggle. Keeping in mind that the PKK started waging the guerilla warfare against the Turkish state beginning from 1984, this was mainly a change in the level of organization of political violence as an extension of the ideological and strategic radicalization of the Kurdish movement in the 1970s. Regarding the process of radicalization in the methods of struggle of the Kurdish movement in 1979-1980, this process affected all Kurdish movement organizations and gave rise to the PKK's strategy of armed propaganda. In other words, contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement had already been dominated by political violence before the military coup happened in September 1980.

Strong emphasis in the literature on the 1980s-1990s, when guerilla warfare dominated the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement, conceals the fact that claims-making performances did not begin with armed struggle and it evolved from nonviolent methods of struggle to political violence via equipping more radical political goals. Initially, this creates an analytical problem of underrating the importance of historical change processes which creates disillusionment about how a set of interactions devolves into the next decades concomitantly. Contentious politics scholarship proposes to be equipped with a methodology of delineating cycles of contention which mainly emphasize the importance of questioning how "wave of interrelated collective actions and reactions" transforms (Tarrow, 1998: 143-44). Underestimating the historical dynamics behind such a sociological phenomenon also has a consequence of reifying the whole history of the Kurdish movement with the predisposition of thinking violence as the *only* means of struggle employed by the Kurdish movement actors.

To analyze the dynamics of contention in the Kurdish context also requires a detailed analysis of post- World War I period which had specific effects on formation

of collective action frame in the 1970s, known as the *thesis of colonialism*. The alliance between Kurdish elites and founding cadres of the Republic was broken just after the establishment of the new Turkish nation-state on the basis of the Kemalist ideology which did not recognize the Kurds as a distinct ethno-national group and denied the existence of the Kurds in Turkey. The repertoire of contention between the Kurdish claimants and the Turkish state during early encounters emerged during the establishment period of the Turkish Republic in which the main form of interactions between actors was shaped over violent repertoires. Taking into account that period of 1924-1938 witnessed 17 contentions in this context (Taşpınar, 2005: 64), rather than being independent "rebellions" from each other, these were parts of a resistance that had leanings towards Kurdish nationalism against the Turkish state's attempt of monopolizing violence in the region. During this episode of contention, Sheikh Said, Ağrı and Dersim "uprisings" represent three major clashes which resulted in an extensive physical and social demolition in the region followed by forced migration of people in the Kurdish provinces. Nevertheless, the following period (1940-1960) after the suppression of these contentions witnessed the co-optation of the Kurdish elites by the Turkish state with certain patronage mechanisms. However, the Turkish state could not transform the majority of the Kurdish-speaking population in the way that the Kemalist project aimed since the establishment period. This situation caused the emergence of a *socio-political regime* in the Kurdish region in which state and society relations were different from the other parts of Turkey.

Re-emergence of claims-making performances over Kurdishness occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s in an unorganized manner and having very little political significance. As a consequence of the relative increase in the level of

democracy after 1960, Workers Party of Turkey (TİP) was established and became one of the main sites of getting organized for pro-Kurdish leftist cadres. The emergence of Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey [TKDP], which was an illegal organization, was related with the rise of a Kurdish movement in Iraq and also showed the specific character of the Kurdish contention which transcended the boundaries of the nation-states like Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The emergence of the Eastern Rallies in 1967 in various towns and provinces of the Kurdish region had a framing of the Kurdish contention as a problem of socio-economic underdevelopment with specific references to need for opposition against feudal elites in the region and repressive practices of the Turkish state. In 1969-1971, framing the state repression against the Kurds occupied the political agenda of the Kurdish university students who were gathered around Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearts [DDKO]. Overall, TİP, DDKO and TKDP were three main organizational structures which gave rise to the early cadres of the Kurdish political parties that emerged after the military intervention in 1971.

Detachment of the Kurdish movement from the Turkish left during the imprisonment period (1971-1974) continued just after the release of prisoners in 1974. The Turkish state's continued denial politics and suppression of the demands for recognition of the Kurdish identity created important outcomes regarding the transition from the 1960s to 1970s. The attitude of the Turkish state was responded by the organized political defenses of the Kurdish prisoners about the collective rights of the Kurds in the early years of 1970s. This process coincided with the Kurdish movement actors' encounter with more radical action frames after fleeing to the other Kurdish regions, Middle Eastern countries and Europe which triggered the radicalization of the framing of the Kurdish contention. Thus, demands such as an

independent Kurdish nation-state via relying on a master frame called as *thesis of colonialism* emerged at the first half of 1970s and it was accepted by all upcoming movement organizations. This was mainly due to the Kurdish movement actors' acknowledgement of the fact that legal political boundaries in Turkey would not tolerate the Kurdish claims. In other words, this acknowledgement caused the Kurdish movement actors to believe that developing a movement on the legal field was not possible. Thereafter, the emergence of the *thesis of colonialism* happened in an interactive process which contextualized the Kurdish/Kurdistan question from within the Marxist ideology and especially over the principles of Leninism by relying on *rights of nations for self-determination*.

This study aims to explain dynamics of mobilization and also the causes of radicalization in the Kurdish movement of the 1970s in the light of arguments proposed below. There are three main arguments analyzed in this study in a detailed way.

First, non-recognition of the Kurds by the Turkish state on both cultural and political grounds created a significant political opportunity structure for the legitimization of claim-making performances developed by the Kurdish movement actors in the 1960s and 1970s. In the second half of the 1960s, demands of the Kurdish political entrepreneurs for the certification of their claims within a legal framework were refused by the Turkish state and this became a crucial factor begetting the ideological radicalization of the Kurdish movement after the 1971 military intervention. Additionally, political changes concerning the Kurdish movements in Iraq and Iran seriously influenced the flow of Kurdish movement in Turkey. The specific effects of other Kurdish contentions on the Kurdish movement in Turkey were on the formation of ideological framing and the emergence of threats

against the denial regime of the Turkish state which triggered the emergence of border conflicts and served to the legitimization of the repressive practices of the Turkish military held in the Kurdish region. As a result, the *thesis of colonialism* emerged in the first half of 1970s and became a master frame for the Kurdish movement while including radical demands such as establishment of a socialist Kurdistan or autonomy for the Kurds.

Second, in the second half of the 1970s, mobilization processes took place in relation to the development of the Kurdish social movement organizations and their interactions with the Turkish state, counter-movements and the Kurdish people. In the years of 1974-1976, when the level of conflict heightened in Turkey, the Kurdish movement actors developed collective actions against the repression of the state and counter-movement actors in order to create mobilization. In the 1977-1978 period, the Kurdish movement achieved a certain degree of mobilization from within a semi-legal framework via employing nonviolent methods. During the mobilization process, nonviolent collective actions focused on ethno-nationalist claims, working class struggle and anti-feudalism as a need for struggling against the power of the Kurdish elites. While the Kurdish movement had such an ideological framing, what were the ways of putting framing into action? In addition to the institutional ways of making people participate in the movement, the novelty of the Kurdish movement was its success about social network based appropriation mechanisms.

Third, the radicalization process in the Kurdish movement happened in relation to the decreasing level of democracy in the regime which closed the way for the nonviolent methods of struggle and the development of Kurdish movement organizations using political violence as a means of mobilizing the masses. Except the PKK, most of the Kurdish political parties believed in accommodating the

‘strategic use of political violence’. This strategy meant that it was necessary to create a considerable degree of mobilization at first before the method of armed struggle would be deployed. The main difference of the PKK from other Kurdish political parties was its strategy of ‘armed propaganda’ which prioritized a violent contentious repertoire and subordinated other methods of struggle to the armed struggle. The declaration of martial law in most of the Kurdish cities in early 1979 and repression of almost all forms of claims-making resulted in pushing the movement towards the violent contentious repertoires. Before the military coup in September 1980, most of the Kurdish political parties prepared for and even performed armed struggle. They either performed acts of organized violence or such sent their cadres to the various parts of the Middle East for military trainings to increase the level of organized political violence.

While these three arguments constitute the general framework of this study, the main claim is that the radicalization of the Kurdish movement took place in the late 1970s before the emergence of guerilla warfare in 1984. While ideological and organizational continuity exist between the Kurdish movement of the 1970s and 1980s, it would be misleading to contextualize the transformation of the Kurdish movement by disregarding the historical legacy of the 1960s-1970s on the next decades. This disregard overlooks the fact that the Kurdish movement did not begin its struggle with a radical political agenda via employing violent methods to realize its goals. Without taking the Kurdish movement of the 1970s into consideration, academic and political discussions about the history of the Kurdish movement is predisposed to assume that the Kurdish claim-making performances started and developed only with organized forms of political violence. Furthermore, this predisposition tends to equalize organized forms of political violence with

‘radicalism’ by overlooking the fact that political violence and other forms of political claim-making operate with similar mechanisms.

Methodology

This study offers a methodological remedy for an understudied period of the Kurdish movement for which there is a dearth of primary and secondary sources. This thesis uses multiple methods; including content analysis of the publications of Kurdish social movement organizations in the 1970s, qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews with former Kurdish movement actors and archival analysis of court proceedings and rulings pertaining to the activities of the Kurdish legal and illegal political parties in that period. Via data triangulation, this thesis uses these sources to understand how meaning-making processes and interactions between the Turkish state and the Kurdish actors led to the emergence of mobilization and radicalization processes in the Kurdish movement.

In studies of contentious politics, any kind of systematic data recording interactions can be used to form catalogs of events in a particular period to understand the variation of collective actions over time. In relation to this, one of the main sources used in this study are political journals of the Kurdish political parties which recorded many related events during the mobilization phase. In this vein, using Kurdish political journals such as *Roja Welat*, *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, *Rizgarî* and *Özgürlük Yolu*, I prepared a catalog of related events from mid-1977 to the end of 1978. This catalog includes events pertaining to sets of interactions among actors having significant influence on transformation of the Kurdish movement. Some of these interactions are ‘state repression’, ‘collective actions of the Kurdish movement’ and ‘collective actions of counter-movements’. These were some of the main forms of interactions happened in the Kurdish region between mid-1977 to the

end of 1978. This does not mean that the Kurdish movement actors did not engage in organized political violence or that counter-movement actors [fascist and Islamist movement organizations] did not employ nonviolent methods in that mobilization phase. Although these kinds of interactions occurred too, these did not constitute a pattern in that period due to their low frequency and its insignificant effect on the flow of the movements.

Additionally, it would be definitely misleading to claim that the political magazines of the Kurdish movement recorded all related events. The number of events represented in the journals was possibly less than the real number of events. Motivated with a political cause, these magazines reinterpreted and filtered all events according to their perception of politics and especially in pursuit of their strategic framing. Nevertheless, none of these events were made up and almost all of them were well-supported with visual evidences and precise descriptions in terms of the name of actors, exact time and place of the event. Thus, through a systematic classification of events, it is possible to observe what kind of interactions happened in the Kurdish contention in the 1970s and how they varied over time.

Reasons behind the use of in-depth interviews with movement actors are twofold. First, studying on the illegal political parties offers some disadvantages for researchers. The illegal character of these political bodies makes it very hard to find written documents regarding their party programs and proceedings. More importantly, activities happened on the illegal field have rarely been recorded. For example, it has not been recorded as a written fact that not only the PKK but also other Kurdish political parties prepared for an armed struggle in terms of moving cadres to outside of Turkey before the advent of the 1980 military coup. This crucial information shows that the military coup should not be considered as an absolute

rupture causing the radicalization of the Kurdish movement. The second point is related to having an idea about the experiences of movement actors regarding appropriation channels which were mainly social network-based in the non-institutional realm. In this regard, the political significance of certain strategies and tactics can be pursued by specifically focusing on the *process* in which movement activities took place, rather than by teleological ways of inference about the political influence of events. Nevertheless, this method is subject to a certain degree of subjective judgment which is a trap that needs to be avoided with cross-checks with other movement actors.

One of the crucial sources that have a significant contribution to this study is court proceedings and rulings which were prepared by the prosecutors of military courts after the military coup. On the basis of the movement activities of political parties, these sources present a quite rich source about the history of Kurdish movement organizations. More importantly, after the declaration of martial law in early 1979, the Kurdish political journals were prevented from being published and there are almost no sources presenting systematic accounts of the events in 1979 and 1980 except court proceedings. Events pertaining to political violence can be seen from these court documents with precise details about how these events actually took place. One of the problems of using these court documents is about validity due to the possibility of unjust procedures applied to arrested people such as extensive use of torture and repression for getting testimonies.

Summary of the Chapters

The first chapter of this study aims to present a theoretical framework for understanding dynamics of mobilization and radicalization in the Kurdish movement of the 1970s. To develop an understanding of the Kurdish movement from a

theoretical point of view, *social movements* literature is critically analyzed in regard to *contentious politics scholarship* with the purpose of using a combination of these approaches. In his chapter, the role of structures and agency in both literatures are examined in order to develop a set of analytical tools for going beyond the structuralist approach. The relational perspective is promising to grasp the dynamics of transformation in the Kurdish movement of 1970s, without simply trying to explicate a general theory to the Kurdish case. This chapter also examines ways in which political violence can be contextualized and considers the method of armed struggle as operating in similar ways with other methods of struggle within the contentious repertoire of the movement organizations. This chapter also delineates the ways in which the mechanism-process approach, as a method of understanding dynamics of contention, can be strengthened.

The second chapter deals with historical origins of the Kurdish/Kurdistan question in Turkey in the 1920-1970 period. The first wave of contentious episode in the history of Kurdish movement [1920-1940] is analyzed in relation to implications of the Kemalist ideology on the emergence and development of the Kurdish contention, state-making activities in the Kurdish region and reactions of the people in the Kurdish region against these activities. The inability of the Kemalist project to penetrate and transform the Kurdish society in pursuit of its ideology and denial of the Kurds as a distinct ethno-national group are examined to see the opportunities and limitations bounded the emergence of the Kurdish movement. An analysis of claim-making performances in the 1950s and 1960s by the Kurdish movement actors in Worker's Party of Turkey and Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey is presented to see the extent of radicalization in the 1970s. With a dynamic-interactive methodology, the emergence of Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearts (DDKO) is

analyzed in parallel to dynamics of change in the socialist movement of Turkey and the advent of the 1971 military coup.

The purpose of third chapter is to show reasons behind the emergence of *thesis of colonialism* and to delineate principles embedded in this ideological framework. In addition to looking at how the Kurdish movement framed the contention, the goals of the movement organizations will be discussed. Framing of the contention and strategies to be applied for reaching stated goals make it also necessary to examine the socio-economic structure of the Kurdish region because of the fact that Kurdish movement actors interpreted the Kurdish society in Turkey from within their ideological framing. In addition to this, interactions between the Kurdish movement actors, counter-movements and the Turkish state is sketched in the 1974-1977 period to see dynamics of change in the early years of mobilization.

The fourth chapter mainly focuses on the mobilization and radicalization processes of the Kurdish movement that happened in the second half of the 1970s. To understand the way in which mobilization happened, both institutional and non-institutional methods of making people participate into the struggle need attention. Regarding the radicalization process, the effects of framing, increasing level of repression posed by the state forces and strategic choices of the movement actors are analyzed in order to delineate the causes behind the radicalization. Each of the Kurdish movement organizations will be examined in terms of their relation with the idea and practice of the armed struggle. The main purpose of this chapter is to show that radicalization of the Kurdish movement happened before the 1980 military coup not merely as a reaction to it.

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a theoretical framework which will be helpful to understand the emergence and development of Kurdish movement in a period from the 1960s to the early 1980s, in Turkey. This chapter begins with a definitional analysis of *social movement* (SM) and *contentious politics* (CP) in order to discuss on what basis these two study areas coincide with or differ from each other. Additionally, the purpose of analyzing social movement literature and the contentious politics scholarship is to look for ways to develop a sound framework combining these two approaches. In this chapter, in order to grasp recent discussions in the literature of collective action, criticisms of contentious politics project against classical social movement agenda will be visited. More importantly, the *mechanism-process approach* which is the main methodological novelty of the contentious politics project deserves attention due to its offering a departure from classical causality model which has been prevalent in the studies of collective action. While problems of this methodological offer will be argued at the end of this chapter, a detailed examination of evolution of social movement literature is necessary to comprehend both novelties and problems of the contentious politics project. Moreover, a critique of structuralist approaches in the social movement literature will try to illuminate how the role of agency should be considered to understand dynamics of collective action. While doing this, this chapter will present a set of analytical tools to understand how interactions between *macro* [structures], *meso* [organizations-networks] and *micro* [individuals] level dynamics are related to each other.

One of the pioneering books for the contentious politics scholarship was published as *Dynamics of Contention* (2001) by Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and

Doug McAdam. The backbone of this ambitious project is its claim to observe similar processes and mechanisms in different forms of contentions such as revolutions, social movements, democratization, nationalism and collective violence. In the light of the criticisms against this project, a new book, *Contentious Politics* (2007) was published in addition to innumerable books and articles of Charles Tilly contributing on the contentious politics literature.

In the light of these scholarly works, mechanisms and processes related to mobilization, political identity creation, nationalism, radicalization and political violence will be analyzed respectively in addition to pursuing a dynamic-interactive approach. Considering the forms of contentions evaluated in the DOC project, the Kurdish movement in the 1960s and 1970s fits into overlap of the two forms of contentions such as social movements and nationalism. In this regard, within the scope of this study, rather than seeking a direct evaluation of theoretical knowledge accumulated in the contentious politics to the Kurdish movement, a relational and critical approach will be employed to put forth a sound framework regarding the Kurdish contention in Turkey.

1.1. Novelties of the Contentious Politics Scholarship: How to Go Beyond the Social Movement Literature?

In recent decade, a group of scholars started to analyze collective actions and political claim-making performances with presuming that different forms of contentious actions operate via similar *mechanisms* and *processes* (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001). In order to see the extent of differentiation between the notions of "social movement" and "contentious politics", it will be beneficial to begin with clarifying their definitions. Charles Tilly defines the elements of a social movement as follows:

> [1] sustained campaigns of claim-making; [2] an array of public performances including marches, rallies, processions, demonstrations, occupations, picket lines, blockades, public meetings, delegations, statements to and in public media, petition drives, letter-writing, pamphleteering, lobbying, creation of specialized associations, coalitions, or fronts –in short, the social movement repertoire,; and [3] repeated public displays of worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment (WUNC) by such means as wearing colors, marching in disciplined ranks, sporting badges that advertise the cause, displaying signs, chanting slogans, singing militant songs, and picketing public buildings (2006: 183-84).

"Social movement" as a term has been used generously in the literature to conceptualize any kind of collective claims-making performances. Therefore, to preserve the precision of this definition can only be possible by distinguishing social movements clearly from other types of collective actions. In this vein, the notion of *contentious politics* corresponds to a larger zone of collective claims-making performances than the notion of *social movement*. The main premise of the *Dynamics of Action* (DOC) project is that "social movements, revolutions, strike waves, nationalism, democratization and more result from similar mechanisms and processes" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 4). Therefore, it should not be surprising that the definition of "contentious politics" covers a broad range of collective actions. The theorists of the DOC project state that:

> By contentious politics we mean; episodic, public, collective interaction among maker of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 4).

In other words, the notion of *contentious politics* covers the zone in which intersection of contention, politics and collective action takes place (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 7). The breadth of the definition above seems to be creating a handicap at first glance in addition to annunciating an ambitious project claiming to be capable

of analyzing various forms of collective actions with the same methodology. Such a call for inaugurating a methodologically novel academic project did not come up without any reason. In this regard, different branches of social sciences such as social movements, revolution and nationalism have specialized within their paradigmatic limits without intersecting with each other so often. Therefore, the intention of contentious politics project is to investigate upon the limits of paradigms and area of specializations.

Considering the Kurdish movement in Turkey, it is hard to say that using *merely* the classical social movement literature which relies on certain paradigms is able to provide sufficient theoretical background for developing an insightful understanding on the Kurdish contention from 1960s to the late 1970s. This claim does not rely on a presupposition about uniqueness of the Kurdish movement on empirical basis; rather, this is related with the limits of the classic social movement approach. Regarding the classic social movement model, Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly voiced that, "It worked best as a story about single unified actors in democratic polities; it worked much less well when it came to complex episodes of contention, both there and especially in nondemocratic states" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 18). In this regard, it is not possible say that that the political regime in which Kurdish movement in Turkey burgeoned -after the late 1960s until late 1970s- can be classified among these democratic polities.

It can be enlightening to question how means of struggle pursued by social movement organizations change, in case of a particular political regime does not operate according to democratic measures. For example, the emergence and development of political violence in a nondemocratic regime is a more common phenomenon in contrast to the democratic regimes. Therefore, the social movement

literature which predominantly relies on the democratic Western regimes and builds its theoretical leverage on this empirical level of analysis seems to be insufficient to promise a satisfying account for grasping dynamics of more radical forms of collective actions.

Criticisms posed by the DOC project against the classic social movement literature are not only limited to inability of the SM literature to have significant explanatory value for the cases of undemocratic regimes. Another vein of criticism underlines that the classic social movement agenda does not offer an adequate picture for a dynamic and interactive approach that would be applied on cases. The DOC project scholars state that "because it is a static, cause-free single-actor model… it provided photographs of contentious moments rather than dynamic, interactive sequences" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 18). Actually, employing a dynamic-interactive model for understanding collective actions is not a totally new move in the literature of collective actions. Scholars like Tarrow and della Porta looking social movements from the prism of contentious politics have analyzed social movements in this way, in order to comprehend continuities, ruptures and changes among the cycles of contention (see Tarrow, 1998; della Porta, 1995). Therefore, the study of contentious politics should not be considered as a full-blown departure from the social movement literature due to the hardships of drawing clear-cut boundaries and because the latter rests on the former paradigm. Contentious politics project should be understood as an attempt of examining various forms of contentions with a novel methodology while admitting weaknesses of the social movement literature and thus trying to supplement its inadequacies.

The main novelty of DOC project emanates from attempting to solve a methodological conundrum claimed to exist in social movement literature. The

remedy for this problem is conceptualized as *mechanism-process approach* by DOC scholars. On that point, definitions of concepts such as "episode", "process" and "mechanism" need to be analyzed in order to launch an inclusive methodological discussion. *Mechanism* means "a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations" while *processes* refer to "regular combinations and sequences of mechanisms that produce similar (generally more complex and contingent) transformations of those elements" (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 29). What precisely is methodological novelty proposed by this approach and there is a need for such an approach? DOC scholars respond as "We turn to mechanisms and processes when we believe that correlations are too shallow. Instead of saying that X causes Y, or that smoking causes cancer (a claim about variables), we say that X is causally relevant to Y, or that smoking is causally relevant to cancer (a claim about mechanisms)" (Lichbach, 2008: 248). In other words, contentious politics suggests a new method to go beyond classical causality model relying on correlations between variables.

In this regard, the question is 'How the issue of causality is resolved via the mechanism-process approach?' According to the contentious politics scholarship, "Each mechanism involves the same immediate cause-effect connections wherever and whenever it occurs. But trajectories, and outcomes of whole episodes differ because initial conditions, sequences, and combination of mechanisms compound to produce variable global effects" (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 127). Actually, while this new method claims to work with causal analytical tools, it mainly measures relations born out of interactions rather than direct causalities among variables.

For a long time, the social sciences remained dedicated to the classical causality model. However, employing this model also brought lots of unresolved problems. In order to come up with a solution to the deficiencies of this model, scholars have been looking for other methods for better measurement techniques to grasp causal connections. The *mechanism approach* is one of these possible solutions suggested so far. That is why it is necessary to ask the following question: Why does the classical causal model fails to provide researchers to develop a sound framework to understand the whole picture? Before answering these questions, one should note that the origin of questioning the causal method mainly emanates from *the crisis of classical causal model*. This crisis situation is succinctly explained by Edgar Kiser and Michael Hechter as follows:

> A causal relation is self-determined and not parasitic on other causal influences. Causal relations must be inferred because […] it is generally acknowledged that causality can never be directly observed. Rather, it must be interpreted on the basis of observables. […] Even when causal inferences can be justified in historical data, this will not suffice for explanatory purposes. A complete explanation also must specify a *mechanism* that describes the process by which one variable influences the other, in other words, how it is that *X* produces *Y*. Mechanisms are vital to causal explanations, for they indicate which variables should be controlled in order to highlight existing causal relations. The explicit discussion of mechanisms makes it more difficult to make ad hoc arguments and often reveals contradictions in arguments that would not be apparent just from a list of causal relations (Kiser, Hechter, 1991: 4-5).

Overall, mechanism approach is able to help researchers to catch causalities in a more precise way. For the literature of collective actions, which has traditionally tended to employ classical causality model, the mechanism approach can be helpful for showing intervening causal links.

1.2. The Evolution of Social Movement Paradigms

Marx and Engels analyzed causalities behind individuals' engaging in collective action with an emphasis on transformation of structures in society when "social class comes into fully developed contradiction with its antagonists" with maturation of class consciousness (Tarrow, 1998: 11). V.I. Lenin came up with a claim and also a practice of vanguard party which led putting forward professional revolutionaries who took action on behalf of the interests of working class and also transform them into revolutionary subjects for the sake of acting collectively in order to realize the revolution. Lenin's proposing such a revolutionary path was actually a reinterpretation of Marx's ideas within the context of a highly repressive state (Russia) in which proletariats' means of gaining class consciousness were blocked and in need of a professional revolutionary cadre (see Tarrow, 1998: 12). Taking into account Gramsci's contribution which underlined the necessity of paying attention also to cultural dynamics, in order to make the revolution come through, leaves us with the following conclusion: for decades, discussions in the social movement literature mainly rested on the ideas which were proposed by Marx, Lenin and Gramsci. In order to see how theoretical and practical legacy of Marx, Lenin and Gramsci influenced the social movements literature, there is a need to visit evolution of social movement paradigm in the academic circles.

Historical development of the social movement literature trifurcated on the basis of rationalist, structuralist and culturalist perspectives. The scholars studying on social movements in the 1960s-70s, like John McCharty and Mayer Zald, proposed *resource mobilization thesis* which emphasized "the significance of organizational bases, resource accumulation, and collective coordination of political actors" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 15). According to the *rationalist* approach to

collective action: “Protest actions derive from a calculation of costs and benefits, influenced by the presence of resources- in particular by organization and by the strategic interactions necessary for development of a social movement” (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 8). In relation to this, it is possible to consider underlying premises of “the rational choice” paradigm within the social movement literature as analytically in the same vein with the resource mobilization approach despite theoretical origins of these two perspectives are quite different. In order to elaborate on similarities between resource mobilization and rational choice approaches, it can be enlightening to refer Myra Marx Ferree: “… the underlying premises of rational choice are evident in the language and overall research agenda of resource mobilization, its focus on incentives, obsession on free riding, distrust of emotionality, and excessive bureaucratic view of social movement organizations” (1992: 47). Keeping this analysis in mind, the contribution of resource mobilization approach into the social movement literature is conceptualized as “mobilizing structures” which considers the role of social movement organizations as vehicles making people to participate into collective actions.

The main criticism concerning these approaches was raised by political process theorists who emphasized the determining power of political factors which are considered to affect both the emergence and also development of the collective action. Sidney Tarrow states that “None of them [referring to Marx, Lenin and Gramsci] specified the political conditions in which resource-poor and exploited workers could be expected to mobilize on behalf of their interests- what we call the problem of political opportunities and constraints” (1998: 13). Relying on this criticism and locating political factors as core, scholars of political process theory called attention to the relationship between institutional politics and protest (della

Porta and Diani, 1999: 10). In this vein, the notion of "political opportunity structure" emerged to investigate the political factors surrounding oppositional groups who seek for employing political power to challenge authorities. A narrowed version of political opportunity thesis is suggested by Tarrow, in 1994, was claiming that social movements emerge as a result of expanding political opportunities (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004: 5). However, in 1998, political opportunities were revisited by Tarrow within a synthetic approach in relation to mobilizing structures and collective action frames (Kurzman, 2004: 114). Additionally, the studies emerged within the political process theorists initiated a new analytical tool named as "repertoire of contention" which refers to "the forms of claim making that people use in real-life situations" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 16).

The resource mobilization thesis, rationalist approach and political process paradigms have been criticized due to not taking cultural, ideological and social-psychological dynamics into account. After the emergence of studies on social movements touching on these areas, the concept of "framing" gained salience which was defined as "'schemata of interpretation' that enable individuals 'to locate, perceive, identify and label' occurrences within their life space and world at large" (Snow, Rochford, Worden and Benfold, 1997: 235). Discussions around the term of "framing" aimed to grasp the links between cultural-ideological frameworks of the social movement organizations with the perceptions of individuals. The recent trend in the social movement studies goes inline with the integration of what those paradigms have suggested so far.

Considering the evolution of the political process model since the late 1970s, it is possible to say that theorists of this perspective have attempted to transform this approach into a synthetic form of analysis. In this regard; "political opportunities and

constraints" and "repertoires of contention" from the early studies of political process theorists, "mobilizing structures" from resource the mobilization approach and "collective action frames" from the culturalist perspective have been adopted as necessary components for defining what the *integrated approach* is. Traces of this approach can be found while Tarrow defines the mobilization phase of social movements: "Once opportunities open and constrains contract, the main kind of resources that organizers use are three: the forms of contention that arise out -and innovative upon- culturally familiar repertoires; the informal networks and connective structures that people live within and build; and the cultural frames they find in their societies and create in struggle" (1998: 201). In order to understand how social movement paradigms are compiled, it will be beneficial to look at Figure.1 which visualizes the relations among the components of integrated approach.

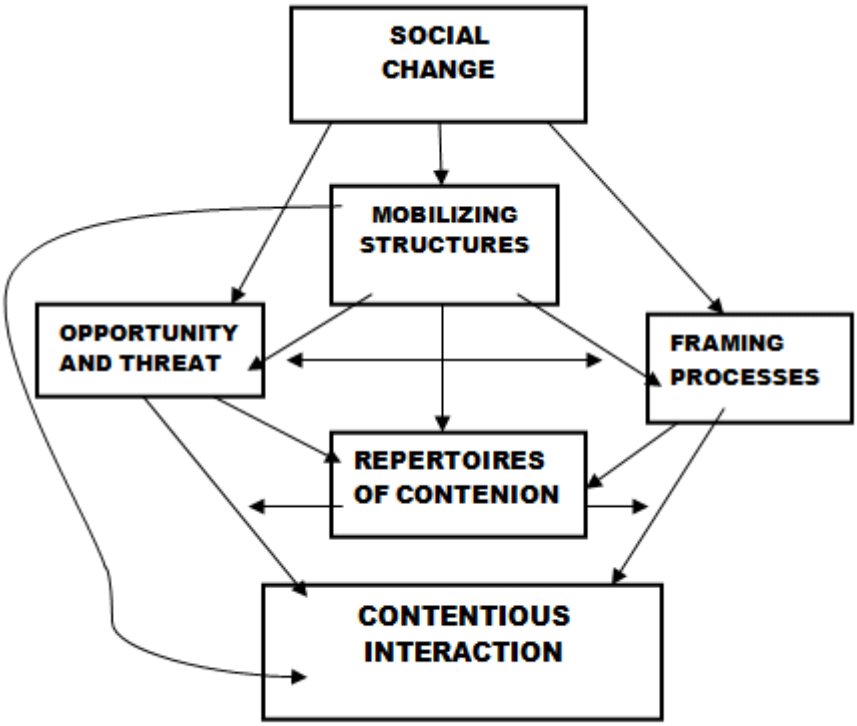


Figure 1. The Classic Social Movement Agenda for Explaining Contentious Politics, Adopted from *Dynamics of Contention*, (2001: 17).

This figure aims to show the model proposed by the classical approach in the social movement literature. According to this model, after a social change process happens, it affects political, organizational and ideological factors bearing the social movements. Although it suggests a model, it is hard to tell that this approach can propose a general theory explaining dynamics of change in social movements.

1.3. A Critical Analysis of Social Movement Paradigms: The Role of Structure and Agency

The theoretical evolution of social movement literature did not necessarily followed linear evolutionary path in the course of development of rationalist, structuralist and culturalist perspectives. More importantly, it is also debatable whether approaches of social movement scholars can be classified into three camps. Nevertheless, scholars of the DOC project have been criticized seriously with a claim of their overrating the role of structures in their theoretical framework and thus underscoring the importance of agency. It is noteworthy to visit this debate for looking for the ways in which a sound framework can be constructed.

Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow narrowed down the scope of the political opportunity structures into a few major variables. Tarrow and McAdam suggested that those opportunities are: 'the degree of openness or closure of formal political access', 'the degree of stability or instability of political alignments', 'the availability of influential allies, the existence of a division among political elites' (which indicate on political conflicts) and 'the state's capacity and propensity for repression' (McAdam, 1996: 27) and 'strategic use of facilitation' (Tarrow, 1998: 76-85; Tilly, 2006: 44). On the other side, Goodwin and Jasper claim that political opportunity thesis can be falsified empirically: "There are innumerable instances of social movement mobilization in context where political opportunities can only be

described as *contracting.*" (2004: 14). The extent of the criticism about political opportunity thesis goes beyond this point due to political opportunity structures occupies a central position in the early works of the DOC scholars. Jack Goldstone succinctly expresses the critique of Goodwin and Jasper toward political opportunity thesis in the following way:

> (1) In pointing us to the "political," it emphasizes conditions relating to states, tending to neglect the role of counter-movements, allied movements, critical economic conditions, global trends and conjunctures, and various publics. (2) In pointing to "opportunity" as the label for changes relevant to movement actions, it tends to neglect how, in many cases, adversity -such as threats, excessive repression, or counter-movement actions- can energize and elevate movements, increasing their support and chances of success. (3) In pointing to "structures" (whether constant or changing) it tends to emphasize pervasive large-scale conditions, and suggest necessary and sufficient conditions for certain outcomes. In fact, different groups may face very different group- and issue-specific conditions regarding their mobilization and success, and such conditions are often more fluid and relational than they are "structural" in character (2004: 356).

These critical remarks mainly question the structuralist tendency embedded in the political process approach via bringing agency of movement actors into debate as a significant dimension of collective action. Moreover, it is ambiguous whether those opportunities proposed by McAdam and Tarrow represent stable political structures or dynamics determined by strategic choices of the states or challengers in the course of contentious interaction. For example, propensity of the state to exert repression on challengers seems to be a strategic choice-based volatile dynamic rather than being a stable structure. For the sake of preventing precision of 'structures' and 'strategies', it will be enlightening to refer Goodwin and Jasper:

> "Political opportunities were once called political opportunity structures -an oxymoron that collapsed fleeting strategic opportunities into stable structures. Presumably, "political opportunities" were meant to avoid this trap, but they continue to be treated as structures, even when they are seen as changing or changeable. Structures and strategies, despite their different logics, get

> conflated. What are structures if not something fixed, stable, and outside our control? We must work within structures, taking their shapes into account. But if they change frequently or easily, especially as a result of strategic choices, then they should not be labeled structures" (2004: 17).

In order to investigate the political environment in which social movements are operating, Goodwin and Jasper propose two main parameters. The first one brings a short-term/long-term distinction for the political factors and thus recognizes difference of structures and strategies. The second one concerns whether movements are able to change or affect these factors which can be quite helpful to detect how agency matters. A set of these factors can be seen in Table 1.

The Political Environment of Social Movements		
	Can movement actors affect it?	
Time-scale	*Usually not, or marginally*	*More often, or more powerfully*
Longer-Term Factors	• Political structures, e.g. • electoral systems, implementation powers, administrative structures • Constitutions • State's physical capacity for repression	• Laws • Court Decisions • Administrative procedures
Shorter-term factors	• External events, e.g. accidents • Information revealed, e.g. scandals • Shift in elite alliances	• Actions of opponents • Media coverage of protest • State repression

Table 1. The Political Environment of Social Movements, Adopted from "*Caught in a Winding, Snarling Vine*", 2004.

A similar analytical perspective was developed by della Porta who examined the evolution of German and Italian leftist movements in a comparative framework. Della Porta suggests focusing on two analytical levels as "stable" and 'volatile' levels to understand environmental factors binding social movement activities. The 'stable opportunities' are exemplified either as 'institutional' or 'cultural' variables

which refer to “police organizations, the nature of the judiciary, law codes, and constitutional rights” and “political culture” in a particular regime pertaining to the state and citizens relationship. Furthermore, the second analytical level which is named as ‘volatile’ suggests concentrating on “the shifting results of the interactions of different actors” via taking into account the roles of all conflicting or cooperating actors such as political parties, interests groups, trade unions and voluntary associations (1995: 55-57). Overall, della Porta’s framework analytically distinguishes ‘stable’ and ‘volatile’ dynamics in a similar way to Goodwin and Jasper’s approaches which distinguishes short-term and long-terms environmental factors. Nevertheless, Goodwin and Jasper are able to put agency of movement actors into the center of their analysis and thus promise a leverage for breaking with structuralist perspective which overrates the role of ambiguously defined political opportunity structures. Consequently, employing an agency-based approach for environmental factors remains limited without contextualizing how ideological and cultural factors matter. In this regard, examining ideological and cultural dynamics is a must to develop a full-fledged account of social movement activities.

1.4. How Ideology, Framing and Culture Matter?

The notion of “collective action frame” refers to "the conscious, strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996: 6). Main criticism against this definition claims that the scope of this explanation is narrow (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004: 23). However, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald emphasize that this narrowing down is deliberately suggested by the aim of preventing to equate any cultural dimensions with the framing (1996: 6). Nonetheless, the criticism continues with underlining that cultural factors shape

framing processes in a larger sense and it would be incorrect to reduce emergence of the framing to an utterly conscious and strategically chosen context (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004: 24). Taking this criticism seriously, it can be fruitful to develop an opposition against the framing approach which regards collective action frames as deliberately and strategically chosen set of meanings while omitting the cultural context in which these strategies are come into being.

Another vein of criticism on framing perspective indicates that framing approach does not pay enough attention to the ideological factors. "The framing approach in social movement scholarship … has tended to focus on the processes of strategic framing rather than the belief structures that inform activists' understanding of the political world" (Gillan, 2008: 261). Questioning the role of ideologies is fruitful in the sense that revolutionary movements having a pre-determined political program praise ideology densely. In this regard, taking ideology seriously can be defined as paying attention to the ideological principles and revolutionary strategies possessed by the challengers which are mainly constituted via the *barrowing* mechanism (see McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 143) - from the socialist revolutions happened in Russia, China, and Cuba.[1] Therefore, one should not underestimate the role of ideology due to its shaping both political identity forming mechanisms and strategies followed by the movement organizations.

Consequently, the ideas in different sides of the debate about framing of the contention is mediated by Tarrow: "… changes in the symbolism of a movement are neither derived directly from the culture nor woven out of the whole cloth of

[1] Considering the 1960s and 1970s, ideological framing of the socialist movement in Turkey mainly relied on imported ideological framings and divisions among the socialist legal/illegal parties were seriously affected from these differences (see STMA, 1988: 2233-2281). The Kurdish movement in the 1970s experienced a similar process in addition to centering "national self-determination right" thesis within the socialist ideology theorized by V. I. Lenin. In the following chapters, the link between the ideology, framing and culture will be discussed elaborately.

ideology, but are the results of its strategic interaction in its various and changing settings" (1998: 109). The call for understanding the emergence and development of the framing in a dynamic-interactive approach seems to be promising. Moreover, according to Doug McAdam and William Sewell, it can be enlightening to pay attention on the perceptions of challengers which are not stable mind sets and subject to changes via the influence of transformative events encountered during contentious interactions with other parties. That is why the "functions of events" for challengers are important and not the events themselves (Alimi, 2006: 69). In other words, not only events' coming into being is crucial to analyze, but also the influence of the events on the framing of contention deserves attention.

Despite there are plausible criticisms about the weaknesses of the framing analysis, not many answers exist about the questions pertaining to framing of movement and their political environment. So, the question is "How to develop a conceptual framework which links framing analysis to the dynamics of contention or to larger socio-political change processes?" Mario Diani proposed a framework -that can be seen in Figure.3- which attempts to answer to the question via examining changes in political opportunities during formation of and/or changes in collective actions frames. The first kind of political opportunity, which is 'opportunities for autonomous action within the polity', can be thought in relation to the openness of political system for new claims-making performances in addition to emergence of influential allies and the division among political elites. On the other hand, 'opportunities created by a crisis of the dominant cleavages' pertains to a breakdown in 'the stability of political alignments' resulting from cleavages in a particular polity (Diani, 1996: 1056). If the claim-making performances lack opportunity of accessing into a polity and a division among elites exist and/or influential allies is

present for the claimants and/or opportunity of favoring from a breakdown in the polity is possible, the expected form of collective action frame can is "antisystem frames". In detail, *antisystem frames* challenge fundamental traits of a political system: on the one hand, dominant cleavages and identities, and on the other, its capacity to accommodate heterogeneous and often conflicting interests and orientations within the political process need attention (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 80).[2]

	Opportunities for Autonomous Action within the Polity		
Opportunities Created by a Crisis of the Dominant Cleavages		**High**	**Low**
	High	Realignment Frames	Antisystem Frames
	Low	Inclusion Frames	Revitalization Frames

Table 2. Political Opportunities and Master Frames. Diani (1996: 1056)

This scheme can also provide an account regarding the changes in the collective action frames in response to changing political opportunities throughout episode of a contention (see Bosi, 2006: 83). Consequently, admitting that political opportunities influence the way that framing of the contention emerges and spreads, this assumption supports the argument that construction of these frames are not only strategy-driven but also shaped by the factors which are beyond the ability of movement actors to affect in the short-run. A compiled version of strategic and

[2] Considering the Kurdish movement in Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s, the category of antisystem frames deserves more attention which will be argued in the following chapters in a detailed way. For now, it can be enough to state that the KM reached an antisystem frame in the mid 1970s while opportunities for autonomous action in the Turkish polity did not experience a significant change regarding the Kurdish political identity and denial of Kurdish existence continued in this period too.

cultural factors which social movements can affect is constructed by Goodwin and Jasper in Table 3.

Cultural and Strategic Factors		
	Can movement actors affect it?	
Time-scale	*Usually not, or marginally*	*More often, or more powerfully*
Longer-Term Factors	• "Plausibility structures" • Institutionalized news media routines • Strand cultural repertoires of images, tropes, language, assumptions • Tactical repertoires, "know-how" • Master frames	• Slogans, policy proposals • Affective bonds within movement • Movement identity, pride • Skill of particular leaders, recruiters
Shorter-term factors	• Fashions in media attention • Opponent's efforts to affect public opinion, sensibilities, media • Governmental efforts to influence opinion, sensibilities, media	• Symbolic effects of protest events • Arguments, rhetoric that gets attention • Outrage, indignation over opponents' policies • Credibility of opponents • Frames • Strategic choices abut timing, style, application of tactics

Table 3. Cultural and Strategic Factors. Adopted from "*Caught in a Winding, Snarling Vine*", 2004.

While the changes in the master frames are generally beyond the agency of movement actors in short-run, symbolic matters, short-term strategic plans, construction of frames can be shaped by the movement actors in short-term while political identities may be affected in long-term. Overall, understanding the dynamics influencing emergence and development of collective action frames can be possible by focusing on two dimensions; the first one is about political opportunities as dynamics beyond agency of movement actors affecting framing of the contention and the second dimension is about strategies which can be employed by movement actors to influence movement activity based on their willpower.

1.5. Relational Approach in the Social Movement Scholarship[3]

To what extent can collective actions be understood by relying on a theoretical framework? In other words, what should be the extent of explaining certain empirical cases by sticking to a theoretical framework? Jack Goldstone proposes focusing more on "external relational fields" which seems to be an effort of questioning the idea of reaching a grand theory in the social movement studies. Regarding the 'external relational fields, Jack Goldstone aims "to suggest that there is no clear set of necessary and sufficient conditions for the emergence, growth, actions, and outcomes of social movements" (2004: 356-57). This approach assumes that theoretical deductions may not have great explanatory power for all cases and admits the fact that necessary and sufficient conditions vary from one case to another. There is another camp of scholars who developed a more promising critical framework against the scheme of integration to construct a theory of social movements. Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper and a number of other scholars claim that factors labeled as "structural" actually emerge from the strategic interactions which requires taking cultural, emotional, interactive dynamics more seriously into account. Therefore, political process model is accused of committing to the "structuralist bias". In this vein, Goodwin and Jasper put this position into words as follows:

> "At the empirical level, we need to be sensitive to the historically shifting and situationally contingent combinations and sequences of processes and events that give rise to varying forms of social movements and collective action more… Fidelity to, say, three big concepts is the last thing we need ... Some kinds of movements require political opportunities, whereas others do not; some recruit through preexisting social networks, whereas others do not; some require

[3] Relational approach in the contentious politics scholarship will be analyzed in detail in this chapter in the section of "1.10.1.Revisiting the Role of Agency and Reproduction of Structuralism in the Contentious Politics Scholarship".

> powerful grievances or collective identities, whereas others do not" (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004: 27).

Rather than reaching a general theory claiming that social movements -emerging in different parts of the world in different times- can fit in a general model, according to Goodwin and Jasper, necessary and sufficient conditions can vary from case to case. Therefore, components of the classic social movement agenda (political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures and framing) theorized from a limited number of empirical cases may not offer an adequate leverage for constructing necessary and sufficient causes.

In relation to this, concerning to the struggles for developing an integrated approach, Tilly, McAdam and Tarrow urges the students of social movements as follows: "This integration can not simply take the form of aggregation of variables drawn from different traditions but can best occur in the context of a dynamic approach to process of contention" (1997: 160). Following this caution, rather than attempting to apply an integrated approach into the Kurdish case fixed to the classic social movement agenda, via relying on the mechanism-process model, a relational approach can be followed. Thus, to understand different phases of contentious politics and identity creation processes can be understood by determining key mechanisms in a particular episode of contention.

1.6. Repertoires and Regimes in the Contentious Politics Scholarship

Although Goodwin and Jasper propose a well-defined critique of structuralist approach, they do not suggest necessary analytical tools which would help researchers to locate environmental factors binding social movements. Scholarship of Charles Tilly is more useful for analyzing the role of changes in

political regimes and large social change processes.[4] Tilly comes up with a set of analytical tools enabling us to problematize changes in the level of democracy and roles of the state and/or power-holders regarding the level of analysis in which contentious interactions take place.

Tilly's classification of political regimes is based on two main parameters which are *governmental capacity* and the other one is the level of *democracy*. *Governmental capacity* refers to "degree to which governmental actions affect distributions of populations, activities, and resources within government's jurisdiction" and *democracy* is defined as "extent to which persons subjects to the government's authority have broad, equal rights to influence governmental affairs and receive protection from arbitrary governmental actions" (2006: 21). These analytical tools examining the regimes can be used either in a static way to classify regimes or in a dynamic way to grasp changes across time in a particular political regime. According to Tilly, when parameters like democracy and governmental capacity oscillate among high, medium or low levels, these changes affect challengers which lets us understand the connection between regime changes and contentious action.

What kind of particular outcomes emerge in case of changes in the level of democracy or governmental capacity in a regime? Opportunities and threats come out as a result of changes in political regimes (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 57). Thus the ways in which these opportunities and threats perceived by challengers and what they attribute to those changing dynamics become the matter at stake. In order to

[4] According to Tilly, a regime consists of *agents of government*; *polity members* who are defined as "constituted political actors enjoying routine access to the government agents and resources"; *challengers* explained as "constituted political actors lacking that routine access"; *subjects* are defined as "persons or groups that not currently organized into constituted political actors"; and the last member of the regime is *outside political actors* which includes other governments (2003, p.29).

discuss the characteristics of the regimes, it is necessary to grasp its connection with the related institutions and contentious performances which are shaped by the regimes.[5] The zones of *prescription*, *toleration* and *forbiddance* are not limited to the institutions and they are also related with the boundaries of acceptable forms of claim-making. *Prescribed* performances include "ceremonies of allegiance (e.g. singing of national anthems) and transfer of resources (e.g. tax money and conscripts) to governmental control", *tolerated* performances involve "filing of legal claims and organized responses to moral offenders". These two zones also determine the form of the contention which is conceptualized as *contained contention*. *Forbidden* performances include "violent attack on rulers and governmental resources" (Tilly, 2003: 47). If the character of claim-making transforms into forbidden zone, the contention evolves to *transgressive* forms from the contained version.

The areas covered by those zones of prescription, toleration and forbiddance vary in the axes of democracy and governmental capacity. For example, "High-capacity undemocratic regimes prescribe an exceptionally wide range of institutions and performances. But they tolerate only a narrow range of institutions and performances, while forbidding many institutions and performances" (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 60). On that point, it is viable to ask a question regarding those prescribed, tolerated and forbidden zones. "How do these performances of governments affect dynamics of mobilization and collective violence?" Configurations related to the prescribed, tolerated and forbidden zones limits the opportunities of coordination among challengers who play crucial roles regarding

[5] Considering the institutions: *prescribing* some of the institutions such as belonging in political parties while *tolerating* some of the institutions such as gatherings of religious groups to get together as long as staying out of the public politics and *forbidding* still some other institutions such as private militias are presented as examples (Tilly, Tarrow, 2007: 60).

emergence of collective violence. Means of *incorporation* in large scale and *separation* in small scale are determined by the limits of the prescribed, tolerated and forbidden performances of the governments/states (Tilly, 2003; 78-79). If those zones do not permit challengers to realize coordination in contained form of contention, transgressive forms can be adopted thereafter. In other words, regime characteristics put limits on the repertoire of the collective action by influencing the extent and the form of coordination among challengers.

The significance of regimes characteristics is connected with its role in the determination of the form of contentious interactions, which is conceptualized as the *repertoire of contention.* In order to make sense of the link, there is a need to address that the repertoire "calls attention to the clustered, learned, yet improvisational character of people's interactions as they make and receive each other's claims" (Tilly, 2006: 35). Analysis of this definition shows that contentious repertoire of challengers is not formulated independently from previously learned experiences. Understanding the factors behind change in the repertoire of contention can provide a significant leverage for grasping the reasons of radicalization in terms of a change from nonviolent performances to the violent ones, which is mainly a shift in the repertoire of contention. "Rapidly shifting threats and opportunities … generally move power-holders toward rigid repertoires and challengers toward more flexible repertoires. Power-holders cling to proven performances, including repression of challengers; meanwhile, challengers seek new means to outwit authorities and competitors" (Tilly, 2006: 44). In other words, increase in the uncertainty in political regime push power-holders to insist on strategies like escalating repression while challengers may look for novel forms of struggle. Therefore, rapid regime changes deserve a detailed analysis in addition to necessity of weighting what challengers

attribute to those threats and opportunities. Overall, changes in governmental capacity and democracy have significant effects on the form of contention and thus repertoire of action, which also provides us analytical tools to understand why political violence emerges as a form of interaction between power-holders and challengers. While these analytical tools are able to provide leverage to understand dynamics of contention, they cannot be considered as the surpassing factors on other levels of analysis according to relational perspective.

1.7. The Mobilization Process in the Contentious Politics Scholarship

How the process of mobilization as one of major processes in the contentious politics can be explained by relying on the mechanisms? Answering this question requires developing an interactive framework which both includes relations and reciprocal influences of the mechanisms on each other as it is schematized in Figure 5. For challengers, *perceiving threats and opportunities*, *appropriating organizations and social networks* and *innovating in the inherited repertoire* are some of the main mechanisms explaining the mobilization process. The mechanism of *attribution of threat and opportunity* can be considered as a revised form of the political opportunity structures thesis in a sense recognizing the significance of perceptions of the political actors about changing threats and opportunities in a political regime.[6] Political opportunity structure (POS) thesis in the classic social movement agenda considers opportunities and threats without taking perceptions of the political actors into account (see Charles Kurzman, 1997: 67). Therefore, it is possible to say that the DOC scholars admit that "political threats and opportunities are not objective categories" (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 45) which means it is necessary to take

[6] *Attribution of threat and opportunity* involves (a) invention or importation and (b) diffusion of a shared definition concerning alterations in the likely consequences of possible actions (or, for that matter, failures to act) undertaken by some political actor (Tilly, Tarrow, McAdam, 2001: 95).

subjective perceptions of political actors into consideration. To sum up, the mechanism of attribution of threat and opportunity "contains both structure and agency, namely the collective meaning attached by social movement activists to changes in the structure of political opportunities" (Alimi, 2006: 77).

Social/organizational appropriation can be explained in this way: "Nonpolitical groups transform into political actors by using their organizational and institutional bases to launch movement campaigns" (Tilly, Tarrow, 2007: 34). The unit of analysis proposed for the *appropriation* mechanism can be addressed as individuals, social networks and organizations. Considering ethno-nationalist movements, this mechanism seems to have a significant explanatory power due to prevalence of preexisting-shared identity based social networks in the context of mobilization phase in ethno-national movements (see Tilly, 2003: 33).

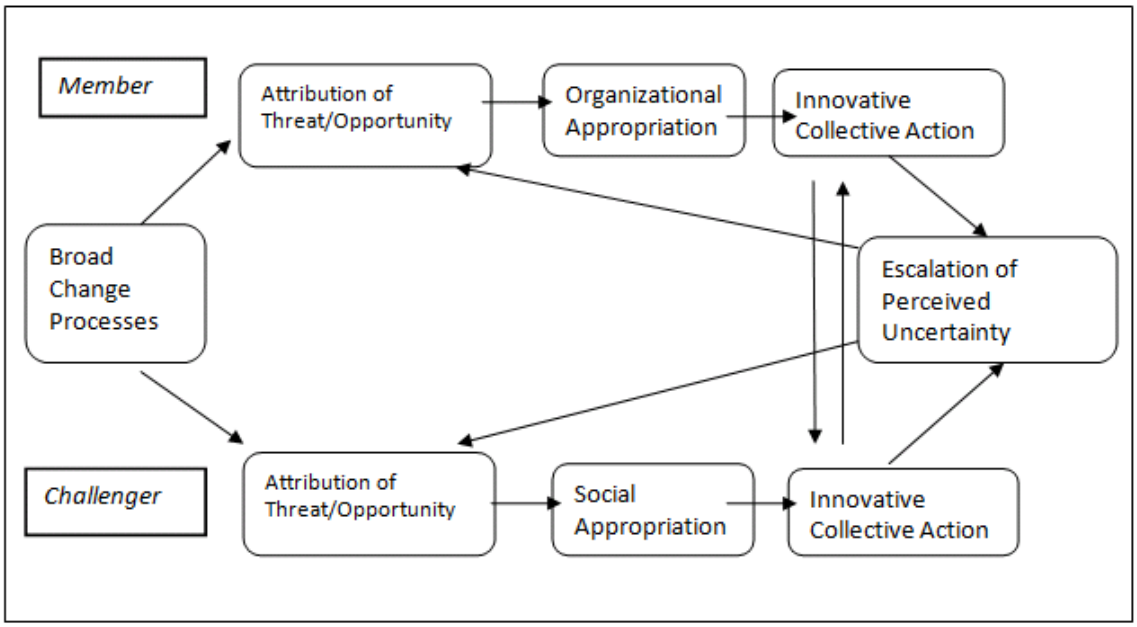


Figure 2. A Dynamic, Interactive Framework for Analyzing Mobilization in Contentious Politics, Adopted from *Dynamics of Contention*, (2001).

Figure 2 succinctly shows how mechanisms are interrelated to each other in the mobilization process. The way that change processes are perceived by the movement actors and their actions toward reaching their claims to social and organizational sites

and adopting actors/institutions to their struggle matters in the mobilization phase. Moreover, innovative collective actions influences uncertainty in their political environment which then restarts the mobilization cycle by new attributions to the changing political dynamics.

As mechanisms combine into processes, a process called "new coordination" deserves attention which connects three key mechanisms, such as *brokerage, diffusion* and *coordinated action. Brokerage* is defined as "linking of two or more currently unconnected social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with each other and/or with yet another site" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 142).[7] While *brokerage* is realized by the challengers, it yields to diffusion of the contention and to emergence of a coordinated action among challengers (see Figure 2.1. in Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 32). A historical analysis of contentious politics shows that it is possible to see innumerable examples which witnessed successful efforts of developing innovative collective actions, but could not translate these efforts into a more coordinated level and, thus failed to increase salience of the contentious action. According to Tilly and Tarrow, this is because of lack of building a coordination in which mechanisms of brokerage, diffusion and coordinate action are inscribed.

While discussing the mechanisms influencing mobilization process, it is important to note that emergence of a coordinated action also has a significant effect upon alliances and rivalries among actors within a political regime. On that point, it would be helpful to discuss the mechanisms which further the waves of contention to more salient forms and even to national or international levels. In this vein, *scale shift* is defined as "a complex process that not only diffuses contention across space or social sectors, but creates instances for new coordination at a higher or lower level

[7] "In simplest version, sites and units are single persons, but brokerage also operates with cliques, organization, places and, at the limit, programs" (2001: 142).

than its initiation" (Tarrow, Tilly, 2007: 94). The scale shifts can happen in two ways: the first way is *downward scale shift* explaining coordination at a local level and the other way is *upward scale shift* refers to the coordination of the collective action higher than (whether regional, national and also international) the initial condition (Tarrow, Tilly, 2007: 95). For example, if a claim-making performance such as the strike emerging in a local context gains support on national level and thus accelerates the wave of contention, this can be considered as an upward scale shift.

Although the DOC project suggest more than 40 mechanisms for understanding various forms o contentions, these mechanisms analyzed so far are only a part of them letting researchers to have a closer look at mobilization process. Therefore, while analyzing the mobilization process led by the Kurdish movement in the 1970s, these mechanisms can explain dynamics of mobilization into a certain extent but not completely.

1.8. Political Identity Shaping Mechanisms and Nationalism

The study of contentious politics attempts to answer the following question regarding the construction of the political identities: "How contingent assemblages of social networks manage to create the illusion of determined, unified, self-motivated political actors, then to act publicly as if they believed that illusion?" (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 159). In contentious politics, the formation of political identities is observable in *boundary formation* mechanisms which focus on how *boundary activation* and also *deactivation* in some cases are realized by movement actors. Concerning most of the claims-making performances -including those emerging among ethnic groups-, a new boundary formation is generally shaped over 'already existing boundaries' rather than emergence of a totally new 'us and them boundaries and novel' understandings or relations to be shared (Tarrow, Tilly, 2007: 78-9). In a

similar vein, political identities are constituted over activation of *boundaries* pertaining to "us" and "them" categories, rejuvenating shared *stories* about those boundaries, crystallizing *social relations* across the boundaries and also social relations *within* the boundaries (Tilly, 2003: 32).

In relation to this, claim-making performances are classified into three categories as *identity*, *standing* and *program* claims. Identity claims basically voice the existence of a political action and seeks for recognition. The mechanism of *certification* deserves attention on this point and it refers to "the validation of actors, their performances, and their claims by external authorities" (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 145). *Standing* claims mainly announce that while the actor is a part of a particular political regime, it "deserves the rights and respect" concerning their political identity. The last category is *program* claims-making that "calls for their subjects to act in a certain way" (Tarrow, Tilly, 2007: 82). The study of contentious politics offers an insightful analysis on *how* political identities are constructed. However, it is still questionable whether links between identity shaping mechanisms and the major processes of contentious politics are deservedly monitored. In order to understand if there is truly a gap or not, what is viable to ask is "How do claim-making performances clustered in three categories produce effects?" One of the answers provided for this question follows:

> The effectiveness of program claims depends in part on the prior effectiveness of identity and standing claims: Is this a recognizable, credible actor that has the right to make such demands? If the answer is yes, the struggle has just begun. Could and would the objects of program claims actually make the changes or yield the resources the contentious actor is demanding? How will third parties, including governments, react to the claims? These questions take us into the thick of contentious negotiation (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 86).

According to this answer, the functions of identity and standing claims are to concentrate on the rightness/legitimacy of a claim. In case of these claim-makings

are successful, program claims seek for getting attention of governments and the thirds parties for creating a change in the political regime. However, it is hard to conclude that all claims-making performances follow this order. [8]

Without dealing with discussions in the nationalism literature questioning if nationalism should be studied as a discourse and whether nationalism is essential or invented, the DOC program considers nationalism as a form of contentious politics. This offers a suitable ground for studying Kurdish ethno-nationalist movement in the 1960s and 1970s from the prism of contentious politics. Via referring to Ernst Haas, the Doc scholars propose their perspective on nationalism in the following way:

> **Nationalism** is a claim by group of people that they ought to constitute a nation or that they already are one; but this generic category divides into: (a) *National sentiment*, a claim that people on one side of a categorical boundary ought to exercise self-determination at some point in the future; (b) *Nationalist ideology*, a body of arguments and ideas about a nation advocated by a group of writers and activists embodying a political program for the achievement of a nation-state; and, (c) *A national myth*, the core of ideas and claims that most citizens accept about a nation-state beyond their political divisions when a nation-state is successfully created. Furthermore, **a nationalist movement** is a struggle between (a) activists that embrace nationalist ideology and (b) states and/or other groups which either oppose or are indifferent towards their claims (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 230).

Clarifying how contentious politics examine these definitions related to ethno-nationalist movements is necessary for understanding whether ethnic or national movements are considered as a distinct form of contentious politics. According to the DOC program,

> To understand why nationalism arises, we must understand its varied political sources. We need to know when and why they sometimes converge in nationalist outcomes. We must also ask to what extent nationalist episodes are the results of structural factors, institutional constraints, and cultural constraints and to what extent they emerge from cascades of contention. When we do so,

[8] Related to the sorts of claim-making performances, Tilly suggests that: "Three sorts of claims build in rough order: without a recognized identity, it is hard to demand political standing; without standing, it is hard to voice support for a program. Hard, but not impossible" (Tilly, 2006: 32).

> we are likely to find that nationalist outcomes intersect with motives, movements, and state policies having little to do with nationalism. We are thus likely to find similar mechanisms to those that drive other forms of contention" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 227).

With taking the Italian unification and the Soviet disintegration cases into account, four key mechanisms have been proposed by the DOC project: *opportunity spirals*, *identity shift*, *competition* and *brokerage*. In relation to this; *opportunity spirals* "operate through sequences of environmental change, interpretation of that change, action, and counteraction, repeated as one action alters another actor's environment" (2001: 243). This mechanism can be evaluated as a sequential version of attribution of opportunities and threats which were introduced before. Furthermore, *identity shift* is defined as follows: "formation of new identities within challenging groups whose coordinated action brings them together and reveals their commonalities" (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 34). As the other related mechanisms have been analyzed so far, it can be said that state-seeking national movements are not categorically treated as a part of totally novel form of contention, rather, ethno-nationalist contention shares similar mechanisms with other forms of contentious politics.

Assuming that the study of contentious politics has offered a considerable extent of analytical tools regarding the sorts of claim-making performances and those mechanisms which link that particular political identity into to the contention, what about the role of in this framework? *Political entrepreneurs* engages in *brokerage* activities by linking various social sites and they also "specialize" in activating boundaries, stories and relations, connecting distinct groups and networks and also coordinating. More importantly, they also specialize in representation of that specific political-claim (Tilly, 2003: 34).

Analyzing nationalist contentions with similar mechanisms to other forms of contentious actions does not mean to analytically equate them and thus disregard peculiarities specific to a kind of contention. The leading question here is "In what ways different forms of nationalist agendas determine the dynamics of contention?" Two different forms of nationalism are *state-led/top-down* nationalism and *state-seeing/bottom-up* national movements. Top-down nationalism "claimed the right of existing rulers to impose their preferred definitions of national culture and welfare on subjects of their regimes" while the bottom-up version developed a claim on "the right of distinct nations within heterogeneous states to acquire political independence" (Tilly, 2003: 33). Additionally, the contentious politics scholarship admits that nations are constructed and it also locates "the state" at the center of their analysis while classifying different forms of nationalisms. The relevance of this distinction with the 1970s of Kurdish movement is not hard to figure out as of the mobilization in the KM happened via the state-seeking collective actions frame.

More importantly, claim of contentions burgeoning over nationalist dressing emerge and develop in similar mechanisms with other forms of contentions does not necessitate excluding cultural/ethnic sources of nationalism (see McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 227). In this regard, symbols of categorical distinctiveness such as language and ethnicity are considered to be "mobilized forms of political identity" by the DOC scholars (2001: 230). To show how *top-down* nationalisms and *bottom-up* nationalisms are related to each other, Charles Tilly states the following argument:

> Each fed the other; the more rulers tried to impose national cultures and obligations, the more distinct minorities clamored for independence. Because people had often organized networks of trust, trade, sociability, and mutual aid around religious and ethnic ties, top-down nationalism did not simply wound minority self-esteem; it threatened their means of day-to-day survival (Tilly, 2003: 33).

Considering that both cultural and political forms of Kurdish identity were denied by the Turkish State, it is possible to speak about a major threat against the Kurdish society in Turkey in the way analyzed by Tilly above. While discussing about sources of nationalist outcomes in the Kurdish case, policies of the Turkish State as a rigid denial policy about recognition of the Kurdish identity played a significant role about emergence of ethno-nationalist outcomes in the 1960s and 1970s, in terms of its ruining possibilities of a negotiation via forbidding demands of *certification*.

1.9. How to Contextualize Radicalization and Political Violence in the Contentious Politics Scholarship?

It is possible to admit that many violent incidents begin with nonviolent forms of claims-making performances (Oberschall, 1997: 164; Tilly, 2006: 12). Due to the fact that political violence is one of the most prevalent forms of contention in politics, it is noteworthy to discuss the dynamics of change from nonviolent means of protest to exertion of political violence. Without problematizing political violence within the framework of the contentious politics, it is hard to understand *why* political violence escalates as an extension of *radicalization* and *how* political violence influences interactions of actors existing in a political regime. By the aim of contextualizing political violence, it can be analyzed as a particular form of contentious repertoire in collective action (della Porta, 1995: 3). In other words, rather than perceiving political violence as an aberrant pattern in a way that is coded in commonsense, claimants' resorting to political violence should be considered as a change in the repertoire of the collective action.

Scholars of social movements tend to treat armed struggle either (a) as the unproblematic extension of ordinary social movement processes, or conversely, (b) as a pathological effect of competition or decline within social movements (Seidman,

2001: 112). The DOC project is positioned at the (a) side of this division while early social movement studies put forth by della Porta, Tarrow and others on the (b) side. Nevertheless, Tarrow and della Porta do not specify how to understand political violence emerging in the mobilization process. Remembering that interactions between the governments and challengers play a prominent role in the emergence of radicalization, governments' implementing repressive strategies against challengers during the mobilization phase can also influence movements' to resort employing political violence in the mobilization process. For developing a critical perspective to support the argument that political violence is not a pathological peculiarity of demobilization process, Charles Tilly offers a wider framework and also concurs that collective violence is analytically operate within the same way that nonviolent methods do.

> Collective violence occupies a perilous but coherent place in contentious politics. It emerges from the ebb and flow of collective claim making and struggles for power. It interweaves incessantly with nonviolent politics, varies systematically with political regimes and changes as a consequence of essentially same causes that operate in the nonviolent zones of collective political life (Tilly, 2003: 238).

The emergence and development of political violence should be understood with an interactive approach. Thus, it is necessary to look at the contentious interactions (a) among the power-holders and challengers in order to understand how political violence becomes salient in an interactive way and (b) among social movement organizations by the aim of calculating the role of competition in terms of escalation of contention. These two dynamics represent the origins of *radicalization* which causes outcomes as such: "the expansion of collective action frames to more extreme agendas and the adoption of more transgressive forms of contention" (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 69).

Entering into the analysis of meso [organizational] level requires considering the role of competition among social movement organizations which plays a crucial role and further escalation of violent interactions. Scholars like della Porta have examined the significance of organizational competition in German and Italian cases in this way: "Once violence had erupted and groups that acted as entrepreneurs of violence had emerged, the meso-level (organizational dynamics) assumed the determining role, influencing in its turn developments at the macro- and micro- levels". In this context, transformation of political entrepreneurs to *specialist in violence* plays a significant role regarding the violent character of contentious interactions.[9] The relation between micro-level [individuals] and meso-level of analysis depends on the following variables: individuals' level of involvement into a movement, selections of networks-comrades, development of movement identity and justification of violence (see the Figure 8.3. in della Porta, 1996: 203).[10] In other words, in the course of armed struggle, the mechanism of *appropriation* which politicizes individuals and networks operates in a similar way as it works in nonviolent methods of struggle. Nevertheless, the main difference for an individual between employing violent and nonviolent means of struggle is the increase in the cost of participation into collective action in case collective action includes violent methods.

In order to concretize how interactions between the power-holders and challengers matter, the following questions need to be answered: In what ways do governments develop response to a particular claim-making performance? Regarding

[9] The term of "political entrepreneurs" is defined by Charles Tilly (2003: 34) as political actors who create new connections between previously unconnected social sites. They specialize in activation of boundries, stories and relations; connection of distinct groups and networks and coalitions; coordination of joint actions as a part of these coalitions; and finally representation by claiming to have the right to speak for a group of people.

[10] Listening to the life stories of movement activists can provide valuable data for weighting the role of these variables for understanding change in the dynamics of violent contention.

the state strategies there are mainly two ways such as pursuing *facilitation* or responding a particular claims-making with *repression*. Charles Tilly presents an instructive scheme about possible outcomes of state strategies (*See table 4*).

	Anticipatory	**Responsive**
Repression	*Preventive actions and threats*	*Retaliation*
Facilitation	*Mobilization*	*Rewards*

Table 4. The Nexus of Repression-Mobilization, *Regimes and Repertoires*, Charles Tilly (2006)

Tilly sketches possible outcomes of the state actions when meeting with a claim-making performance. The repression-facilitation nexus generally occurs in a more complex way than it is categorized in Figure 6. Possible effects of repression on the movement actors and the way that repression is implemented is analyzed as follows:

> Consider *repression, efforts to suppress either contentious acts or groups and organizations responsible for them*. In one form or another, repression is a predictable response to contention, with relatively predictable effects –generally stiffening resistance on the part of threatened communities, encouraging evasion of surveillance and shifts of tactics by well organized actors, and discouraging mobilization or action by other parties. Repression may be selective, in which case isolates more militant groups and closes off to them prescribed or tolerated means of contention. Or it can be generalized, in which case it throws moderates into the arms of the extremists (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 69).

Selective use of repression employed by governments aims at deepening ideological and organizational distance between the reformists and radical camps of a social movement (Tarrow, 1998). Nevertheless, lots of contentions have witnessed that implementation of repression does not directly lead to demobilization and instead, mobilization under repression is a possible outcome (see Davenport et al., 2005). That means there are some intermediary variables which affect the dynamics of mobilization and therefore, an answer should be developed for clarifying the conditions in which repression leads to mobilization or vice versa. To understand the

relation between repression and mobilization, looking at Figure 3. will be illuminating:

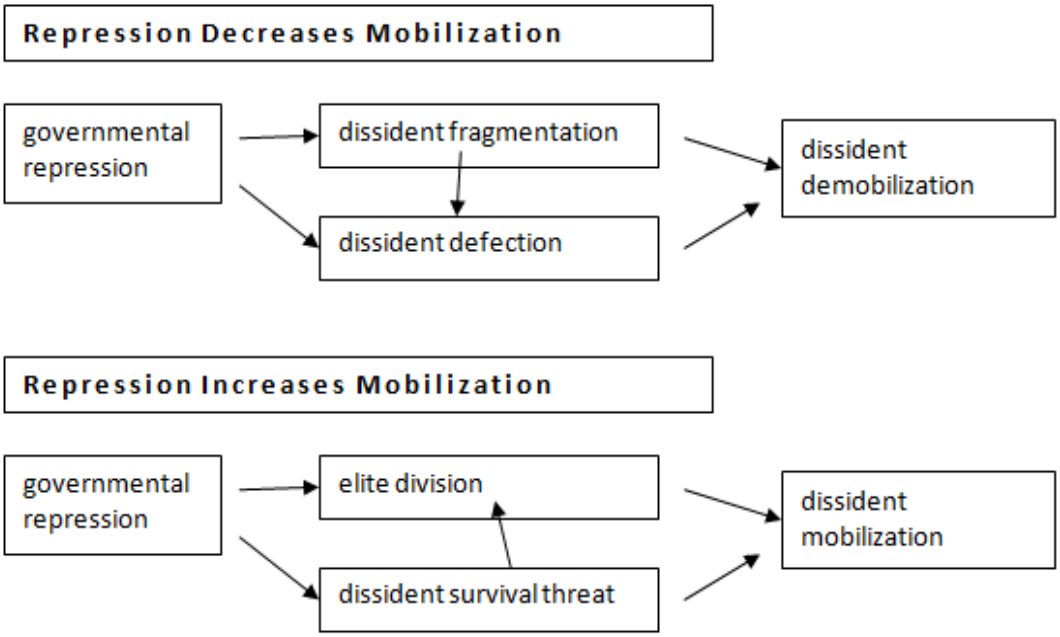


Figure 3. The Repression-Mobilization Nexus, Adopted from Charles Tilly (2005) for measuring the influence of repression on the mobilization.

Charles Tilly, while sketching these two scenarios, warns the students of contentious politics that these scenarios do not constitute general laws and the interplay of initial conditions, mechanisms and processes have crucial explanatory value to influence the outcomes (Tilly, 2005: 224-25). According to Tilly, the key variable in the course of governmental repression is whether political elites act in a unified way or not. If divisions among elites exist and repression cannot fragment challengers, it is likely to expect mobilization as result of the governmental repression. This set of relations can shed light on the question of why repressive practices of governments do not always bear same outcomes. For the Kurdish movement in Turkey, governmental repression existed in varying degrees throughout the 1970s but generated different outcomes

regarding the early and late years of the 1970s. Tilly's formulation is able to show reasons behind this variation.

1.10. A Methodological Critique of the Contentious Politics Scholarship

Regarding the mechanism-process approach, the relation between of mechanisms-processes as ideal-types with the empirical level of analysis is problematic. In this vein, the 'events' are considered to be units of analysis and their bearing repeated interactions create *mechanisms* which then combine and become the constituents of *processes*. That means "If X lead to Y, the mechanism is the process through which X led to Y" (Earl, 2008: 356). The authors of the DOC project distinguish their methods with variable-based explanations in a way that moving variables-based method to one step further. "Analysts ordinarily tell causal stories about relationships between dependent and independent variables, but in the variable mode the act of explanation itself consists of demonstrating correspondence. Mechanistic explanations, however, go well beyond correspondence. They specify what sort of event produces the correspondence between the presumed cause and the presumed effect" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2008: 309).

The events were considered to be manifestations of interactions take place. Therefore, the characteristic and frequency of events allow researchers to classify and work on them which lead them to construct mechanisms and processes. As stated before, the first problem about the contentious politics scholars is about the way that concepts were constructed. The DOC project follows Weberian formulation for embodiment of constructs, which can be defined in the following way: "to pull out an attribute from here, an attribute from there, an attribute from somewhere else, and

form with them an 'ideal-type' construct" (Hopkins, 1978: 203). Taking into account that it is impossible to make social sciences without concepts, the idealization of constructs itself does not constitute a methodological problem. Nevertheless, if ideal-types considered to be representing a bunch of attributes, it has to have clear-cut boundaries and its representative power for related events should not be low. Ideal-types proposed by contentious politics scholarship do not fulfill these criteria and thus leaves a considerable margin of ambiguity. In order to grasp the importance of this problem, one needs to focus on problems of measurement regarding the mechanism-process approach.

1.10.1. Measurement Problems in DOC Project

Not independent from the first one, the second problem about mechanism-process approach is related to difficulties of measuring mechanisms. Since they are defined in an ambiguous way, measuring in terms of understanding whether a specific mechanism exist in streams of repeated events is quite troublesome. On the other hand, Mcadam, Tarrow and Tilly claim that these mechanisms can be measured with several methods:

> Focusing on mechanisms of contention, we begin with two forms of *direct measurement*: [1] Mechanisms of contention can be measured directly by using systematic events data to identify and track the mechanisms that produce episodes of contention… [2] Mechanisms can be measured in another direct way: through the use of field ethnographic methods to study a complex social movement "field." We then turn to two forms of *indirect measurement*: [3] Much of social science is based on indirect statistical measures. Such measures are usually associated with correlational methods, but we will argue that they can also be used to indicate the presence or absence of particular mechanisms… [4] Field-Ethnographic methods can also be used indirectly to indicate the presence or absence of mechanisms (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2008: 311).

Although DOC scholars claim that mechanisms can be measured with the ways stated above, solution for the problem is not that much simple. In the pioneering

book of DOC project, there are 44 mechanisms mentioned throughout the book to be used for explaining the changes in the realm of contentious politics (see Koopmans, 2002). Related to this, *mechanisms* as constructs lack precision in the course of classifying repeated-similar interactions among actors in a political regime.

Regarding the way that contentious politics scholars analyze specific contentious cases while proposing a new method, it is apparent that using systematic events data comes first. This can also be generalized to earlier works of these scholars. They have rarely used ethnographic ways of measuring in order to grasp dynamics of contention. It is almost impossible to develop a sound framework for any kind of contention via *merely* using systematic events data unless it is accompanied by ethnographic methods providing insights about meso (organizational) level of analysis. On the other hand, the most beneficial side of looking at systematic events data is its providing great leverage for describing how a certain contention emerges, develops and evolves. This is mainly because the method used from systematic data allows researchers to see *how* interactions happened, not *why* it happened, per se. On that point, it is necessary to pose the question of "What is the deficiency of employing only events data in studies of contentious politics?" Taking into account that contentious politics scholarship detaches itself from variable-based explanations –although not completely-, measuring causality becomes a though issue despite DOC project claims to measure analytical tools pertaining to causality.

1.10.2. Revisiting the Role of Agency and Reproduction of Structuralism in the Contentious Politics Scholarship

Mechanisms are separated into three categories by DOC scholars: environmental, relational and cognitive. *Environmental* mechanisms are "externally generated

influences on conditions affecting social life." *Relational* mechanisms "alter connections among people, groups and interpersonal networks." Cognitive mechanisms "operate through alternations of individual and collective perception; words like recognize, understand, reinterpret, and classify characterize such mechanisms" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 25–26). That means every mechanism can be classified as environmental, relational or cognitive. In order to understand the idea behind such a distinction and conclude if this is compatible with the aim of the DOC project, there is a need to look at works of Donatella della Porta.

D. della Porta proposes distinguishing three levels of analysis while studying on social movements: *macro* (large-scale change structures), *meso* (movement organizational dynamics) and *micro* (individuals) levels of analysis interact with each other. Interactions among these three levels of analysis determine the flow of the movement and one can be dominating interchangeably according to dynamics in emergence, development and demobilization phases of movements (della Porta, 1995)- a factor that emphasizes the importance of *temporality* per se. The main idea behind this approach is that dynamics pertaining to different levels of analysis [large scale structures, movement organizations and individuals] should not be crystallized under certain categories but rather they should be put into a historically dynamic framework. Mechanism-process approach suggests using more precise temporalities like processes regarding the evolution of a contention. Therefore, one needs to question how processes and mechanisms are classified in the contentious politics scholarship to go beyond 'phases' of movements.

Regarding these three broad categorization about mechanisms, Platt states that "Environmental and relational mechanisms are patently structural. Cognitive mechanisms appear personal, yet their empirical illustrations indicate they are

structurally determined" (Platt, 2008: 112). Therefore, DOC project's purpose with this categorization can yield to reproduction of structuralist perspective via mechanistic methods. If one looks for the reasons behind this structuralist tendency, it would probably be the lack of causal explanations via mechanistic approach and attempt of fulfilling this gap with a structuralist gear. Remembering that scholars in this project were encountered with a serious criticism of having "structuralist bias" (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004: 27), it would be beneficial to keep in mind that it is revised version of structuralist academic tradition gave rise to the DOC Project. Nevertheless, contentious politics scholarship acknowledges the role of agency to some extent in the new approach especially via emphasizing that categories they propose are not "objective" and this varies according to perception of the challengers (see McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2001: 45).

> "In a discussion of activists' consciousness and decision-making, the authors limit agency by stressing that activists' mental processes occur within 'webs of interaction among social sites' and these are not reducible to 'individual mental events,' thus 'this book … assigns great causal efficacy to relational processes' (DoC, p. 23). By insisting that activists' consciousness and decision-making occur within determining networks the authors reassert structure's explanatory priority, thereby diminishing activists' agency" (Platt, 2008: 112). .

This critique actually opens a window for a set of other criticisms in the same vein. One of the main problems about mechanism-process approach is its concealing the role of actors/institutions, which is also a way of de-emphasizing how agency changes dynamics of collective action. The lack of causality in mechanism-process approach, resorting toward structuralist way of analysis and thus limiting the role of agency are all connected to each other in the course of methodological problems about the DOC project.

Regarding these "causal" analytical tools, "The authors insist they are not creating a general theory of conceptual laws operating invariantly in all forms of contention. Instead, the ways in which mechanisms and processes combine, sequence and are influenced by local circumstances shape social movement consequences. Movement outcomes derived from the same mechanisms vary from one episode to another" (Platt, 2004: 114). In other words, relying on the relationalist perspective, while a mechanism can play crucial roles in a particular contention, it may not have any explanatory value for another case. Therefore, it is possible to say that contentious politics scholarship offers a relational perspective rather than claiming to explain all kinds of various contentious interactions over a set of general rules in a determinist way.

In order to explain the main problem in the methodology of contentious politics project, there is a need to show how relation between cases and the condition which seems to explain these cases becomes troublesome. Anyone applying methodological perspective of DOC project can fall into a trap of troublesome abstraction.

> "… one rapidly (sometimes thoroughly- it does not matter) scans a series of cases and classifies them either as instances under some general rubric ('revolutions) or as instances under it. Alternatively, one scans them with a view to uncovering what a subset of them has in common (which becomes the equivalent of the general rubric) and the remainder lack… One then, almost without thinking about it, inverts the subject and the predicate: one moves from this 'case' exhibiting this 'condition' to this 'condition' having a 'case', as an instance. Now, in so moving, one has 'abstracted' the condition and made it, in its now categorical form, the focus of attention and inquiry" (Hopkins, 1978, 211-212).

In here, Terence Hopkins emphasizes how the empirical level and abstraction of constructs can easily be inverted in the early phases of concept construction. 'Conditions' which considered to be defining the case can easily be converted to the

leading analytical tools shaping the research. What the contentious politics scholarship does with the production of *mechanism* fits into Hopkins' criticism about producing categories from abstracted forms of instances which then become "the focus of attention and inquiry".

Although the contentious politics project emerged with an ambitious claim for understanding various forms of contentions from a holistic perspective, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly could not develop a workable method that would enable students of contentious politics to implement across various cases. On the one hand, problems about social movement literature addressed in the scope of purposes of this project are quite acceptable but these problems have not been solved even after *Contentious Politics* (2007) was published. On the other hand, the methodological novelty of DOC project should be recognized due to its leaning to an utterly new methodology in collective actions literature. Nevertheless, methodological approach proposed by DOC scholars contain various problems such as lack of causal links, high level of description, problems about construct building and suppressing the role of agency and reproducing structuralism. Consequently, researchers who are aware of these problems may pursue a more sophisticated method for understanding collective actions without facing with problems of abstraction.

1.11. Explicating Theoretical Model on the 1970s of Kurdish Movement

This study will combine social movement literature with the contentious politics scholarship because of the fact that both of these approaches have particular strengths and weaknesses. Although the model proposed by contentious politics has certain methodological problems, overcoming these problems is possible with using proper methods which would enable us to make causal inferences. The main methodological weakness of the contentious politics scholarship is its lacking

causality which requires paying more attention to meso-level analysis in order to avoid trap of structuralism. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald pose important questions about this issue and provide a plausible account to overcome this problem. "How do macro and micro propensities get translated into specific mobilization attempts? What are the actual dynamics by which movement activists reach decisions regarding goals and tactics?..." To answer these questions, what is needed is more systematic, qualitative fieldwork into the dynamics of collective action at the meso level. We remain convinced that it is *the* level at which most movement action occurs and of which we know the least" (McAdam et al. 1988, p. 729). This study seeks for a remedy to the problem of meso-level analysis by using in-depth interviews conducted with Kurdish movement actors. In this way, understanding reasons behind strategic decisions, tactics and goals of the Kurdish movement actors and its political implications become possible. Rather than remaining limited to life stories of the movement actors, getting information about meso level dynamics and data about events happening on the illegal zone is possible with focusing on movement actors' perceptions.

In order to analyze macro political and socio-economic factors in the regime of Turkey, Tilly's analytical concepts such as 'level of democracy' and 'state capacity' will be used. Relying on Tilly is necessary especially for the period in which Kurdish movement did not have a significant political power (before 1970s) and was more prone to macro political changes. In order to measure relations between the macro level changes and the meso level dynamics, Goowdin's and Jasper's (2003) perspective will be employed. Goodwin and Jasper suggests asking a question to understand the extent of social movement organizations can change in regard to its relations with macro and micro level dynamics. In this way, it becomes

possible to sketch the ground in which social movement actors make decisions and determine their strategies-tactics and ideologies. Thus, causes behind movement actors' selection of strategic-tactical decisions to be pursued and their ability to influence their political environment become apparent in different temporalities (in the short-run and long-run). Especially for the period in which high uncertainty exist in the political environment, seeing the role of agency becomes possible. After the martial law declared in Turkey and level of democracy started to decrease after 1978, Kurdish movement organizations made different choices about the new political environment which determined the extent of their radicalization.

Tilly's propositions about the nexus of repression and mobilization are very beneficial to grasp political conditions in which repression becomes effective to undermine political power of the challengers or repression yields mobilization of the challengers. According to Tilly, the level of coordination in both sides becomes determining. For example, division of elites about implementation of governmental repression results with mobilization. Regarding the period in which Kurdish movement experienced mobilization process in the 1970s can be explained by relying on Tilly's formulation.

The methodological novelty of the contentious politics project is the mechanism-process approach which is helpful to see causal relationships which requires going beyond the classical causal method. The 1970s of KM witnessed 'processes' such as *mobilization* and *radicalization* sequentially. To conclude which 'mechanisms' were operating during the mobilization process, necessary mechanisms to be visited are: *repression* by the state and counter-movements on the movement actors and the people in the Kurdish region, *attribution of threat/opportunity* as a reaction to these repressive practices, interactions pertaining

to the mechanism of *social appropriation* after the emergence of social movement organizations explain how mobilization diffused from urban areas of Turkey to the cities in the region and rural areas in the region. To grasp which mechanisms exist in specific time periods of the 1970s, looking at dominant interactions among the political actors in the Kurdish region will be enlightening. For example, in the 1970s, political-social actors in the region were the Turkish state, Kurdish movement actors, would-be politicized masses in the Kurdish region, counter-movement actors and the Kurdish elites in the region. Analyzing the specific mode of interactions among these actors will provide a plausible framework to determine how repeated set of interactions conflate and bear specific outcomes.

Regarding the process of *radicalization*, the Turkish state's denial of *certification* demands raised by the Kurdish movement actors prevented the possibility of solving the Kurdish question on the legal ground in the late 1960s. The emergence of a radical ideological framework demanding the establishment of an independent/autonomous Kurdish state, *colonialism thesis*, appeared as a result of denial politics of the state and interactions of Kurdish movement actors in early years of the 1970s. Nevertheless, contentious repertoire of the KM remained within the nonviolent zone until to the end of 1970s. Changing state capacity and considerable shifts in the level of democracy created opportunities and threats for the Kurdish movement and directly influenced interactions among the actors in the Kurdish region. Prevention of most of the collective actions employing nonviolent repertoires by the martial law regime paved ways for the increase in the level of political violence.

While contentious politics scholarship helps us grasp mechanistic causalities, limiting the extent of our analysis with detecting operating mechanisms would push

the significance of agency of movements out of our framework. Therefore, without departing from the classical social movement approach which provides more leverage to researchers for understanding the role of agency, meso-level dynamics in the 1970s of Kurdish movement will be analyzed. Strategic and tactical choices of the Kurdish movement actors considerably affected dynamics of mobilization and certain outcomes of employing strategy of armed propaganda. Overall, while macro-level changes and transformative power of events are taken into consideration in the contentious politics scholarship, linking meso-level dynamics requires using analytical tools suggested by the social movement literature. In other word, the social movement literature is able to show us how movement actors challenged and changed political environment in which movement activities took place in the Kurdish region.

One of the crucial dynamics which affected interactions among actors in the 1970s of Kurdish region was spirals of political violence posed by the counter-movements [or fascists] in addition to repressive practices of the Turkish state. Generally, social movement studies have focused on the left-leaning collective actions while neglecting to study collective actions and political violence generated by the right-wing movement actors. This neglect also distracted academic attention from the right-wing movements and their relations with the authorities. Thus, "state-sponsored social movements" or "political violence" affiliated with the right-wing movements serving to the purposes of governments for manufacturing consent -via direct or indirect ways- remained understudied. In other words, certain facilitative measures can be employed by the governments to ease emergence and development of a counter-mobilization against regime-threatening mobilization. To fill this gap in the literature, Katherine Bowie reminds us Antonio Gramsci's conceptualization of

the state as “seeking the active consent of those over whom it rules” (2005: 46). States’ need for the mobilization of a profound segment of the society in pursuit of its ideological program needs to be visited. Bowie analyzes one of the cases [Thailand] in which the state has deliberately fostered creation of a right-wing social movement in the 1970s against the threat of communism. Consequently, while analyzing the interactions among the power-holders and challengers, putting state-sponsored right-wing activism into our analytical framework is necessary for delving into their relations with political violence.

Conclusion

This chapter describes and analyzes key analytical tools for constructing a framework to understand dynamics of collective action. The main purpose determining the discussions is to combine social movement literature with the contentious politics scholarship. Therefore, beginning with historical evolution of the social movement paradigms, criticisms and contributions of the contentious politics project into the studies of collective action are examined in detail. Although contentious politics scholarship came up with a promising claim of analyzing similar mechanisms and processes in various forms of contentions, there is a danger of conducting studies describing cases very well but saying little about the causal links. Regarding that this problem can be solved with using different methods, with the aid of some of the analytical tools form the social movement literature, it is possible to use mechanism-process approach in an efficient way.

CHAPTER II: KURDISH MOVEMENT IN TURKEY: FROM 1920s TO THE EARLY 1970s

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the origins of the Kurdish question in Turkey and the emergence of claim-making performances on Kurdishness in the period from the 1920s to the early 1970s. In order to present a sound framework about the dynamics of transformation of the Kurdish contention, political regime changes in Turkey will be examined in relation to changes in the level of democracy and state capacity. Unlike the 1970s in which Kurdish mobilization happened, the 1960s should be analyzed as the period in which political significance of early movement actors was low and dynamics of change were more prone to changes in the sphere of macro politics. Furthermore, interactions between the Turkish State, the Kurdish movement and the leftist/socialist movement in Turkey require paying attention in order to explicate dynamic-interactive approach on the 1960s of the Kurdish Movement. Moreover, analysis of interactions shaping the 1950s and 1960s should not remain confined to the political regime changes in Turkey due to the fact that implications of Kurdish/Kurdistan question transcends the boundaries of the nation-states in which the Kurds live. On that point, the Iraqi Kurdish movement gaining power created specific effects on the Kurdish movement in Turkey and affected the level of repression on Kurds in Turkey. This chapter should be considered as a discussion on the historical evolution of Kurdish contention in Turkey from the beginning of the twentieth century until early 1970s. Analyzing this

period is necessary in order to comprehend the extent of radicalization happened with the socialist and ethno-nationalist mobilization in the 1970s.

2.2. The Origins of the Kurdish Question in Turkey

Regarding the roots of Kurdish question in Turkey, if one admits that "… [The Kurds] are, according to the theory of self-determination, the largest people in the world not to have their own state" (Halliday, 2006: 11); it is necessary to problematize *state-making* activities performed either by the Kurds or upon the Kurds by the Turkish state. Therefore, in order to understand the origins of the contentious history of the Kurds in Turkey, it is necessary at the beginning to discuss the early contentious episode (1920-1940) which had specific effects on the flow of Kurdish movement in the latter period.

When the initial modernization attempts seeking a central form of administration started in the Ottoman Empire during the early nineteenth century, Kurdish 'uprisings' also began as an outcome of the threat posed to the autonomy of Kurdish political and religious elites (see McDowall, 1997: 38-47). In this regard, dynamics of the Kurdish opposition in Turkey was strongly related with the nation-state building activities in Anatolia. Homogenization policies toward the Anatolian region targeting the non-Muslim population (the Armenians and the Greeks) had started and continued before and during the War of Independence (Akçam, 1999: 509-523). After the new Turkish Republic was established on the basis of principles of *Kemalism* in the 1920s, the elimination of non-Muslim ethno-cultural groups from Anatolia was almost complete, except for the Greeks. On the other hand, the Kurds were the largest ethno-national group in the new republic who were able to challenge the imposition of official Turkish identity and the Turkish state managed this threat with imposition of the official nation-state identity on the Kurds and denying the

existence of Kurds as a distinct ethno-national group for the sake of their assimilation according to principles of the Kemalist ideology.

The essential components of Kemalist ideology can be addressed as "ethnicist nationalism", "radical secularism" and "authoritarian centralism" (Yeğen, 2001: 61-62) in addition to "Westernization" (Taşpınar, 2005: 21-27). By definition, Turkish ethnicist nationalism embedded in the Kemalist ideology rejected and claimed as illegitimate any kind of claims-making performances based on the collective rights of the Kurds, as a distinct ethno-national group. What was the reaction of Kurds against the new ethno-political regime structure of the Turkish state?

Considering the period after the Turkish Republic was announced in 1923, the Kurdish-speaking population in Turkey engaged in 17 contentions (also known as insurrections) between the period from 1924 to 1938 (Taşpınar, 2005: 64). The main reasons behind the emergence of these contentions should be understood with two main reasons: the first one is Kurds' opposing to state-making activities of the new Turkish state in addition to the endeavors of Turkish state for monopolizing means of violence within the new territorially demarcated nation-state boundaries (Bozarslan, 2000: 10-19). The second reason was Turkish state's breaking the alliance based on promising autonomy to the Kurds in return of fighting together for independence (Koçak, 2009: 38-49). In relation to these two main reasons, three major violent contentions occurred during this interval: *Şeyh Said* in 1925, *Ağrı* in 1928 and *Dersim* in 1938. This contentious episode witnessed a wave of violent repressions and massive deportations by the Turkish State against the resistance of the Kurds to the new regime (Rambout, 1978: 43; Yeğen, 2006: 65; Tekeli, 2008: 161-162). After the ebb of the contentions, in the 1940s, the Turkish State permitted those deported families to return to their homelands. Nevertheless, the social, economic and

infrastructural damage in the Kurdish region that happened during the contentious episode could not be reconstructed in the short-run and the main concern of the Turkish state was crystallized as the consolidation of security in the Kurdish region. [11] Overall, in the Kurdish context, the Turkish state did not hesitate to rely on deploying different applications of "despotic power" which is defined by Michael Mann as follows: "the range of actions which the elite is empowered to undertake without routine, institutionalized negotiation with civil groups" (Mann, 1984: 113).

During the Kemalist period, considering the number and frequency of contentions that emerged in the Kurdish region, these contentions were not simply oppositions to Turkish state's attempts of monopolization of violence without any ideological framework fueled these resistances. On that point, "Into what extent these resistance practices had certain degree of organization and also had links with each other?" is an illuminating question to be answered. Although the leadership of the Şeyh Said insurrection had a religious character, the backbone of the Kurdish opposition against the new Turkish Republic was organized by a clandestine organization known as *Azadi* (Entessar, 1992: 83-84, McDowall, 1996: 192-93). While it is not possible to reach a clear cut conclusion about the role of Azadi due to its clandestine structure as a mobilizing organization behind the 1925 contention, there is enough evidence to be sure about the nationalist agenda of Azadi when analyzing texts about legitimization of the insurrection (Olson, 1992: 74-75). Moreover, a claim on drawing *categorical boundaries* regarding the Kurdish national

[11] It can be beneficial to clarify the term "Kurdish region". According to Osman Aydın who studied the demographic characteristics of the Kurds in Turkey, three different categorization can be skecthed about the provinces that the Kurds have been living in. [1] *Provinces where the Kurds have been majority*; Adıyaman, Ağrı, Batman, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Hakkari, Muş, Mardin, Siirt, Şanlıurfa, Şırnak, Tunceli, Van. [2] *Provinces which overwhelmingly have been occupied by the Kurds*; Erzurum, Iğdır, Malatya, Kars. [3] *Provinces where the Kurds have been minority*; Ardahan, Erzincan, Sivas, Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep. (2004, p.33-38). I use the term of *Kurdish region* in a way which includes the cities included in the first and second categories.

sentiments was much more clear in the Ağrı insurrection in the late 1920s which was organized by a Kurdish organization- *Xoybûn* via an open manifestation about constituting an independent Kurdistan (see Bayrak, 2004: 338; Tunçay, 1999: 135).

It is also possible to see an organizational continuity among the Şeyh Said and Ağrı insurrections in terms of militants leading these resistances (see Çamlıbel, 2005). Morover, differing from the Sunni Kurds via a sect-based division, Alevi Kurds launched a resistance in Dersim against the imposition of violence monopoly of the Turkish state in the late 1930s. The reaction in Dersim contention was less programmatic in comparison to the Sheik Said and Ağrı contentions and it manifested almost no traces about Kurdish nationalist sentiments. Overall, the early Kurdish contentious episode witnessed opposition to the consolidation of a nation-state in the Kurdish region and the language of resistance was not free from a political program and the Kurdish *nationalist ideology*. Overall, suppression of these contentions by the Turkish State can be interpreted as its' having capacity to implement its despotic power on the Kurds. Therefore, it noteworthy to argue on how governmental capacity of the Turkish state changed during the Kemalist period, which also affected the range of prescribed, forbidden and tolerated zones in the political regime of Turkey.

The civil and military bureaucratic elites of the Turkish state had decisive role on the various forms of activities regarding the employment of *coercion* and circulation of both *capital* during the single party regime (1923-1946). Thus, violent suppression of the Kurdish resistance under the command of the Turkish State elites can be considered as an example for the Turkish State's capacity to control over the means of coercion during the single party era. In this regard, the statist economy policies of the Turkish State were quite successful in the 1930s and provided a stable

economic growth rate in this decade (Boratav, 2006: 70). Another indicator, dependence of the bourgeoisie to the Turkish State elites (see Keyder, 1989: 156), confirms significance of this success and also proves the high capacity of state to control capital-related activities.

How did the increasing state capacity influence the stance of the Turkish state towards ethno-political rights of the Kurds in relation to ongoing Kemalist project in the 1930s? After the establishment of the Turkish republic, Kurdish claims-making was among the *forbidden* performances while Turkish national identity was *prescribed* for all Turkish citizens. This situation did not witness any enlargement of a *tolerated* zone which closed entrance of the Kurdish actors into the polity while keeping making claims on Kurdishness --even about the existence of Kurds in Turkey as a distinct ethno-national group (see Yeğen, 1999). Actually, the rigidness of the regime about being uncompromising against the Kurdish demands continued and reached a more despotic character in the 1930s with crystallization of the politics of denial stating that "*There is no Kurd in the Turkish homeland*" (see Yeğen, 2007: 53).

Increasing governmental capacity did not mean that the majority of the Kurdish-speaking population in Turkey was successfully transformed by the Turkish State into the indoctrinated official Turkish identity in the way planned within the Kemalist agenda/program. Borrowing the term of "infrastructural power", which refers to "the capacity of the state actually to penetrate into civil society, to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm" (Mann, 1984: 113), the Turkish state could not achieve s considerable level of infrastructural power in the Kurdish region, throughout the Kemalist period. After the foundation of the Turkish state, attempts to transform the Kurds in pursuit of the Kemalist ideological

program continued gradually. General Inspectorships (*Umumi Müfettişlikler*) as a special form of administration were implemented in the Kurdish region which had authority to control all political, economic and military activities in the region (Koçak, 2003). However, national education disseminating the Kemalist ideology remained less developed in the Kurdish region compared to the west of Turkey (see Başgöz, 1995: 148). Considering the single party period, the state-funded associations such as Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) and People's Houses (*Halkevleri*) were designed as the vehicles of Kemalist transformation in society and assimilation of the Kurds per se, but these institutions could not be successful in the Kurdish region (see Üstel, 1997: 332). Overall, it is possible to claim that the "infrastructural power" of the Turkish state was weak in the Kurdish region. Furthermore, the representatives of the Kurds in the parliament were assigned from the center while there were not any consent-seeking party organizations for regulation of parliamentary politics (Aktürk, 2008: 64). This situation shows how the state capacity in the Kurdish region during the single party regime was low in terms of infrastructural power practices.

Finally, the single party era witnessed Turkish state's reliance mainly on methods pertaining to its despotic power rather than infrastructural power. In other words, while denial politics gained a considerable momentum about the Kurdish identity, various repressive practices dominated the repertoire of Turkish state instead of its being able to employ non-violent techniques for managing the Kurdish question. During and after the suppression of the armed Kurdish resistance in the 1920s and 1930s, the area of *forbidden* zone was quite large against any kind of political claims-making based on Kurdishness. The zone of the *toleration* even against the usage of the Kurdish language was almost absent. The political regime

witnessed to “denial” of the existence of Kurds as a distinct group of people which by definition considered the Kurds as belonging to the Turkish ethnicity and attempted to implement assimilation policies in a way intertwined with repression on the Kurdish identity. Regarding the armed conflicts in the Kemalist period, the repertoire of contention in the early Kurdish contentious episode was shaped unsurprisingly by the political violence which also left a legacy to the latter ones: “The revolts of the pre-republican period, and probably in a more radical manner, the revolts of the Kemalist period (1920s and 1930s) gave birth to a tradition of armed struggle among the Kurds. They have also contributed strongly of the formation of the collective memory of the Kurdish community in this country” (Bozarslan, 2000: 19). Rather than building a direct ideological/organizational link between the Kurdish resistance in the Kemalist period and the post-1960 Kurdish movement, taking this link into account will give us insights about the way that post-1960 movement historicized the early episode of the Kurdish contention.

2.3. Re-Institutionalization of the Kurdish Elites in the Region During the Multi-Party Regime

Charles Tilly offers parameters such *governmental capacity* and *democracy* for analyzing the variation of political regimes over time. Changes in the level of governmental capacity or democracy can yield opportunities and threats for challengers to raise claim-making performances in a particular regime (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 57). For example, within the limits of low level democracy in Turkey’s political regime until the 1950s, no major political claim-making performances were

put forth by the Kurdish movement actors. After the Second World War, transition from single-party system to the multi-party system appeared as the most important shift in the political regime of Turkey. The significance of this transformation can be analyzed as follows: "The elections of 1950 constitute a watershed in Turkish history. Until then politics had been business of the elite, with power being transferred within bureaucracy, or shared with a bourgeoisie who were few enough to permit face-to-face negotiation" (Keyder, 1987: 117). During the single party era, people in the Kurdish region were lacking of true enfranchisement mechanisms. In this regard, throughout the single-party era, while the Kurdish region was a forbidden zone for foreigners to enter, the RPP had closed many of its party branches in the region and even most of the representatives of the Kurdish populated provinces were not living in the provinces in which they were "elected" (Aktürk. 2008: 64). Furthermore, while the Turkish State was denying that the Kurds as a different ethnic group was present in Turkey, political or cultural rights of the Kurds was not subject to any discussion either. As democracy in a political regime is defined with parameters such as *consultation* and *protection* from the arbitrary actions of the state (Tilly, 2006), the Kurdish context was lacking both of them under the shadow of the political climate devolved from the contentious episode of Kurdish resistance in the 1920s and 1930s to the next decades. Transition to the multi-party system opened the ways of *consultation* for the Kurds although this did not bring forth a ground for political claims-making based on Kurdishness.

Throughout the 1950s, Democrat Party (DP) was in reign with pursuing to give up statist and protectionist economic policies and replacing them with the principles of liberal market economy (Boratav, 2006: 98-99). While Turkey witnessed to the rise of economic liberalism throughout the 1950s, political

liberalization did not follow the same way and this period was finalized with a coup d'état of the Turkish military (Eroğul, 1990). Different segments and classes in the society such as middle- and large- scale peasantry, commercial bourgeoisie supported the DP while the industrial bourgeoisie gradually draw its support back from the DP after the mid 1950s (Keyder, 1987). Therefore, it should not be surprising that political and socio-economic policies implemented by the DP aimed to work for the advantage of peasantry and the commercial bourgeoisie. It is possible to state that the Kurdish social and religious elites became part of this alliance. To conclude whether transition represents a full-blown democratization process that would soften repression on the Kurds, it is necessary to question characteristics of democratic transition in the 1950s.

Although some of the limited democratic paces were put forth by the DP government during its initial years, antidemocratic measures such as expanding the scope of penal law and organizing a wave of arrests against the communists took place in 1951. Undemocratic implementations like limiting the right of getting organized increased in the following years which both prevented the organization of a socialist party (Keyder, 1990: 60) and also aimed to narrow down radius of the RPP oppositional actions (Eroğul, 1990). Numerous legislations were accepted by the DP which expanded the range of government to pose arbitrary repressive actions toward oppositional segments occupied positions in civil and military bureaucracy (see Eroğul, 1990: 123-27). Overall, despite to transition to multi-party system in the late 1940s happened, this was not a full-fledged democratization in the political regime which also kept the Turkish military in a vigilant position about an intervention to parliamentary politics against the DP governance.

Majority of the Kurds participated in alliance bloc of the DP. Considering the Kurdish region in the 1950 elections, the level of the votes used for the DP was enough to make DP gaining 34 seats in the parliament out of 44 seats capacity of the region (Sönmez, 1990: 140). Support of the Kurds for the DP continued with diminishes until to 1960 due to the DP's incapability to realize expectations regarding the liberalization of political regime. What were the motivations of Kurds while supporting DP? Some of the scholars tend to analyze support of the Kurds to the DP as the reaction of Kurds' against the Kemalism (see McDowall, 1997; Kendal, 1993), while this is true into some extent but also not enough to explain all related dynamics incorporated the Kurds into the regime.

Before discussing the factors affected the Kurds' heading towards the DP, it will be beneficial to analyze briefly the social structure of the Kurdish society with an emphasis on existing social stratification in the region. Benefits of this analysis will be twofold. Firstly, concerning the Kurdish region, this will show the limits of democracy to be built merely relying on with electoral processes. Secondly, it will also delineate causes of socio-economic underdevelopment of the Kurdish region which was the main theme framed by Kurdish movement in the 1960s.

In the late 1940s, especially in the southeastern part of the Kurdish region, feudal mode of production was still a prevalent pattern in the Kurdish society as a mechanism not only reproducing the social stratification but also having specific effects on the relations of the Kurds with the Turkish State. In this regard, throughout the 1950s, a base of alliance was built between the Kurdish societal-religious elites and the Turkish State on both political and socio-economic basis (Beşikçi, 1970: 53-56). Political parties like Republican People's Party (RPP) and DP aimed to get votes of the Kurds via [1] engaging into patronage relations with the Kurdish elites which

rendered elites to be members of the parliament (McDowall, 1997: 401) and [2] letting Kurdish elites to be main beneficiary of agricultural credits and state subsidies provided by the Turkish State (Beşikçi, 1992: 100; McDowall, 1997: 399). The outcome of this collaboration was re-institutionalization of the Kurdish elites in the Kurdish society while any kind of political claims-making about the Kurdishness was still within the *forbidden* zone.

In order to understand the scope of the forbidden zone in the 1950s regarding the claims-making over Kurdishness, it can be beneficial to look at contentious interactions between the Kurdish political entrepreneurs and the Turkish State. In the 1950s, there was a silent political atmosphere in the Kurdish ethno-nationalist movement as a result of effective repression practices of the Turkish State. Nevertheless, the Kurdish contention(s) which cannot be limited to the borders of Turkish State showed up via the "case of 49s" which refers to number of Kurdish students and/or intellectuals in the late 1950s. After the collapse of monarchial regime in Iraq, Kurdish leader Molla Mustafa Barzani returned from Soviet Union and the Iraqi Kurds were permitted to have a relative autonomy thereafter. However, this change fueled fear of the Turkish state about possible implications of an autonomous Kurdish region at the other side of its Iraqi border, in the Kurdish region of Turkey.

In 1959, one of the parliament members in Turkey proposed a motion stating that "Kurds killed our brothers, come let us kill as many Kurds as they killed Turkomans. Are you going to repay with interest?" (McDowall, 1997: 403). The Kurdish students in Turkey perceived this as a *threat* against the Kurds in Turkey and 105 young Kurds turned this to an opportunity for claims-making over Kurdishness via sending a telegraph protesting this motion. This collective action

resulted with the arrest of 50 Kurdish political entrepreneurs. Relying on the memoirs of Kemal Burkay, initiators of this protest were loosely connected small groups composed of Kurdish intellectuals and students in Diyarbakır, İstanbul and Ankara (Burkay, 2001: 110). Thus, it is not possible to claim that the protest was backed by a legal or illegal political organization. More importantly, during the trials of the 49s case, for the first time, collective and individual rights of the Kurds were manifested by Sait Elçi against the denial politics (see McDowall, 1997).

In order to discuss in details whether the protest about the 49s emerged contingently as an outcome of inter-state dimension of Kurdish contention or a relative opening in democratic channels, one needs to question if the DP governments increased the area of tolerated performances for the Kurds. On that point, there is a claim stating that DP lessened the significance of assimilation policies of the Turkish State toward the Kurds in the 1950s (see Bruinessen, 1992: 340). This is noteworthy to discuss due to one of accusations toward the DP government by the military cadre committed to the coup in 1960 was stated on this allegation. However, this claim can be challenged with two points. First, there is no supporting evidence related to lessening influence of institutional mechanisms regulating assimilation. Secondly, a relative diminish regarding the political and cultural repression on the Kurds is an outcome of the introduction of *consultation* mechanisms as an extension of multi-party system. This did not bring a relief about claims-making over Kurdishness. In other words, a relative fall in level of repression does not directly prove its leading to facilitative mechanisms. In relation to this, this claims-making performance over Kurdishness was responded by the Prime Minister Adnan Menderes with his asking *the 49s* to be hanged with accusing those Kurds to

be communists (see McDowall, 1997: 403). [12] On the other hand, in its initial years in governance, the DP spent great effort for sending a military officer to the court, Mustafa Muğlalı, who was responsible from the murder of 33 Kurds in a border conflict in 1943 (Sönmez, 1990: 141) mainly for short-run pragmatic politics aiming to increasing its votes in the Kurdish region.

Overall, transition to multi-party system did not bring a substantial democratic transformation that would also offer certain collective rights for the Kurds. The main implication of the introduction of relatively free enfranchisement in the Kurdish region resulted with political and economic co-optation of the majority of Kurdish elites. The basis of alliance was mainly composed of introduction of membership in parliament conditioned with claiming nothing about the Kurds against prevalent denial politics and provision of economic concessions especially as agricultural credits. The main outcome of this transition which also continued in the following decades was re-institutionalization of societal powers of the Kurdish elites in the region which became the main basis of opposition raised by the Kurdish movement actors in the following years.

2.4. The Military Coup in 1960: New Constitution, Not Necessarily New for the Kurds

In order to understand the relation between political regime changes and the flow of the Kurdish contention, causes and outcomes of the military coup happened in 1960 must be delineated. In the second half of the 1950s, economic liberalization policies started follow a downward shift which negatively affected the capacity of the state to "affect distributions of … activities, and resources within government's

[12] Regarding the case of 49s, while all of the political prisoners arrested during the DP governance were released after the military coup, 49s were continued to be imprisoned (Çamlıbel, 2001: 211) and the 49s were released in 1962 but rearrested after two years.

jurisdiction" (Tilly, 2006: 21). The social support base of the DP, which mainly was the commercial bourgeoisie, middle and large scale peasantry, started to suffer from a sharp devaluation in 1958, increases in inflation rates and inability of the state to provide agricultural subsidies. Moreover, the industrial bourgeoisie was also uncomfortable with the accumulation strategies proposed by the DP (Keyder, 1990: 61). Restrictions on the mass media and political activities taking place in universities and enlarging scope of government's arbitrary actions against bureaucracy and intellectuals created a heightened level of contention in the late 1950s. Overall, both the level of *democracy* and *governmental capacity* started to decrease after the mid 1950s which were related with the dynamics behind the DP governments' resorting to the authoritarian practices towards the oppositional powers.

In 1960, the military intervention into parliamentary politics entails that the first attempt of democratization in Turkey failed. "The coup had democratic-reformist orientations since it was a reaction against the authoritarian rule of the DP, in line with the outlook of social groups that formed the bases of opposition against the DP (the intelligentsia and civilian/military bureaucracy)," (My translation, Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992: 717). In this vein, the success of the 1960 military coup was also related with the general discontent from the DP government while the agenda of interventionists in the military was ambiguous (Keyder, 1990: 61). First of all, this military coup was put forth by the middle-ranking military officers in a way deteriorating the hierarchy in the military ranks (Eroğul, 1990: 134). In relation to this, fractions emerged within the interventionist military cadre due to controversies on whether transition to parliamentarian political regime should take place in post-1960 period or the military should continue keeping control of the state on their

hands. Thereafter, the polarization among the military elites resulted in the elimination of the radical wing in the Turkish military by the reformists. The new parliament was opened under the strict control of the military officials in two-cabinet system with the presence of National Unity Council (NUC) and a representative council composed of the political party delegates.[13] Most of the examinations about the political regime of Turkey in the 1960s glorify democratic expansions enacted with the new constitution which trivializes the role of the military in Turkey for that particular period. However, it is debatable whether democratic expansion on the constitutional basis can be interpreted as a serious increase in the level of democracy, especially for the Kurds in the first half of 1960s in Turkey.

The significance of the new constitution was its empowering the position of the citizens in relation to the state activities. Within the scope of this constitution, legislative and executive bodies were separated in a way which enabled juridical institutions to audit almost all of the government activities (Eroğul, 1990: 146). "Because it emerged as a reaction to the usurpation of all administrative powers by the parliament during the 1950s, the 1962 constitution had instituted checks and balances through which social groups, even the rudimentary organization, were capable of contestation at the level of the political authority" (Keyder: 1987: 149). Keyder also notes that there is a strong correlation between the opening of political space for different political segments which triggered politicization of the society thereafter. By this constitution, the working class gained crucial rights such as unionization and collective bargaining without performing a class struggle. The new accumulation strategy was Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) which mainly

[13] . More importantly, there was an unofficial clique within the NUC shaping was known as Armed Forces Union (Hale, 1990: 61-63) which was eager to shape the party politics and also played a crucial role for the hang of Adnan Menderes, the prime minister of the 1950s (Eroğul, 1990: 138). In other words, although Turkey started to experience a semi-military regime after 1960 officially, there was also an unofficial cadre of military officials able to influence the politics in Turkey seriously.

followed a developmentalist agenda for creation of a market within Turkey by relying on domestic bourgeoisie via purchasing technological requirements from the external countries.

Unsurprisingly, the new democratic constitution did not bring considerable facilitative measures for political claim-making performances regarding the Kurdish question in Turkey. Rather, the military welcomed the Kurds by arresting 248 Kurdish people to a camp in Sivas. 55 of those Kurds who were political and religious elites in the region were actually members of the DP and they were exiled to the west of Turkey (McDowall, 1997: 404). This military action was legitimized with law no. 105 by the aim of "Realizing certain societal reforms, ruining the order of medieval part of Turkey which relies on aghas and sheiks, showing that there is no supreme political entity than the state, preventing the exploitation and abuse of the people by the societal elites" (My Translation, Beşikçi, 1992: 54). However, "Publicly the NUC spoke of breaking the feudal system, but since only six of those exiled were large landowners, it remained doubtful whether this was the real motive" (McDowall, 1997: 404). Repressing the political actors in the Kurdish region -either being pro-Kurdish or member of DP- was possibly the main reason behind this military action. In other words, the military was uncomfortable with increasing politicization of the Kurdish society no matter if the Kurdish elites who were collaborating with the state on the basis of not developing claim-making performances about Kurdishness.

Policies of the military regime toward the Kurds went beyond arresting the Kurds who had been politically active. As a part of a new wave of assimilation practices, Law No. 1587 was enacted for changing names of the towns and villages in the Kurdish region (Kirişçi, Winrow, 1997: 113). This policy was legitimized by

the NUC via presence of "names which hurt pubic opinion and are not suitable for our national culture, moral values, traditions and customs" (McDowall, 1997: 404). More importantly, in 1961, a new law was legislated related to increasing the number of boarding schools. The second item in the regulation statement announced as "Invigorating Turkish language and culture in particular villages" (My translation, Sönmez, 1990: 174). The word of "particular" mainly refers to Kurdish villages as it can be deduced from the fact that 34 of 41 boarding schools in Turkey had been located in the Kurdish region concerning the 1968-69 education year (1990: 174). Overall, the 1960s witnessed a visible effort of the Turkish State to increase its *infrastructural power* in the region via proliferation of its institutional base for assimilation in addition to interference into daily life for erasing any signs of Kurdishness which is obvious due to change of names of the Kurdish towns and villages.

During the new political regime under the shadow of the military, the head of the military intervention Cemal Gürsel voiced the following statement: "If these incorrigible 'mountain men' men do not keep their quiescence, the military will not hesitate to bomb their towns and villages; there will be such pool of blood which they will sink with it" (Kutschera, 2001: 394, Entessar, 1992: 88).[14] In that specific political conjuncture, the Kurdish movement in Turkey was not developed enough to deserve such a threat (Burkay, 2001: 115) and the main reason of this declaration was related to the contentions between the Iraqi Kurdish movement and the Iraqi government (McDowall, 1997. 404). In the first half of the 1960s, repressive practices toward the Kurds in Turkey were not confined to the factors limited with

[14] Chris Kutschera and Nader Entessar refers to İsmet Şerif Vanlı for this quote which follows in Turkish as follows: "*Eğer bu iflah olmaz 'dağ adamları' uslu durmazlarsa ordu kentlerini ve köylerini bmalamada tereddüt etmeyecektir, öyle bir kan gölü oluşacak ki ülkeleriyle birlikte batacaklar*".

internal politics in Turkey; rather, the flow of the Kurdish contention in Turkey went beyond the boundaries of the nation-states.

2.5. The 1960-1965 Period: Leftist Movement in Turkey and the TİP

Interference of the military into the political regime of Turkey continued after the new constitution was accepted in 1961. New military coup attempts were either repressed in a bloody way by domineering fraction in the military or prevented by political parties on a negotiation basis via reassuring the pivotal role of the army in the politics. The political parties in the parliament were forced to sign protocols by the Armed Forces Union for unquestioning the legitimization of the military coup and other various interactions showed that political parties acknowledged the power of the military (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1993: 54-55). After 1961, transition to multi party system restarted and the Justice Party (AP) could gain government as the political party representing the legacy of the DP. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu also notes that the army has always been cautious about leaving political arena to the parliamentarian regime and the AP has accorded its political activities in a line trying to conciliate on the basis of anti-communism (1993: 58-63).

On the other hand, for the first time in Turkey, a political party having socialist agenda was established in Turkey in 1962 as the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP) in which the left-leaning Kurds participated on a legal ground. Although the TIP could not gain a significant vote throughout the 1960s, it had a significant role for the Kurdish movement in terms of its providing an opportunity for the Kurds to participate in party politics in an organized way over a certain ideological frame of contention. After the military coup, another right wing political party was established as YTP (New Turkey Party) by the Kurdish elites and other right-wing actors. The YTP could gain 30 percent of the votes in the Kurdish region in 1961 elections and

became a part of the RPP government which made it possible for the YTP to persuade the military for the return of 55 Kurdish elites arrested right after the military coup (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 114). The success of this right-wing party, composed of the Kurdish elites is noteworthy: in major 15 cities of the Kurdish region, YTP could gain the votes of the Kurds varying from 35 to 55 percent (Aktürk, 2008: 67). Overall, in the beginning of the 1960s, within the legal field, two main political options divided on right-lest dichotomy were possible for the Kurdish speaking population in Turkey; it is important to question which one *how* and *why* prevailed the other.

While Turkey was experiencing an increase in the level of democracy through the mid 1960s, discussions about the Kurdish contention were permitted on publications as long as it was voiced within the leftist or liberal journals. A few periodicals which were published during 1962-63 were closed down immediately and those who initiated these publications were arrested and charged of being communists and separatists (McDowall, 1997: 405). In fact, liberal framework offered by the new constitution was not valid for the Kurdish claims-making performances and the Turkish State's efforts of managing Kurdish contention with repressive practices to prevent its' gaining salience continued. The framing of these publications regarding the Kurdish contention remained limited to an encrypted eclectic language referring to the Kurds due to the legal restrictions (Burkay, 2001: 144). The main concern of these publications were to voice that the Kurds as a distinct ethnic group are present in Turkey (see McDowall, 1997: 405) rather than having capacity to put forth an ideological framing for mobilization around an ethno-nationalist theme. In this vein, those Kurds who were affiliated with these publications were arrested in 1963 and judged by the military courts known as the

“23s” due to the number of people arrested (Burkay, 2001: 144-147). These arrests also included the Kurdish university student who came from Iraq (Kotan, 2006) who aimed to establish an association bringing the Kurdish students together. The interactions between the Turkish State and the Kurdish activists aiming to annunciate *certification* demands showed that the political regime would not be tolerant against initiatives which intended to increase the salience of the Kurdish contention in the first half of the 1960s.

Another channel for debating about the Kurdish question was opened in a liberal journal, *Barış Dünyası*, (McDowall, 1997: 405) by the initiation of Musa Anter. Discussion here could last longer than the publication experiences initiated by the Kurds. However, both Musa Anter and the owner of that journal (A. Hamdi Başar) were also judged due to propagation of Kurdism (*Kürtçülük*) (Anter, 1999: 182). Moreover, another vein of debate took place in *Journal of Yön* which was belonging to the Turkish leftists, with the pioneering of another leftist Kurdish activist, Sait Kırmızıtoprak (Anter, 1999: 178-79). Analyzing the discussions and framing of the Kurdish contention in these journals can provide leverage for understanding how the Kurdish question was perceived by the early cadres of the Turkish leftists and also the Kurdish activists who then became the political entrepreneurs within the Kurdish movement. Most of the articles published in the *Journal of Yön* framed the Kurdish question over socio-economic underdevelopment and feudalism in the Kurdish region and accepted the ethnic-cultural content of the question timidly while reminding the illegitimacy of any separatist political-claims of the Kurds (Yeğen, 2006: 160-63). Overall, the zone of toleration regarding discussions on the Kurdish question in the first half of the 1960s was wider with a euphemism like “the eastern question” which refers to reluctance about mentioning

the word of 'Kurdish', within the political circles of the Turkish liberals and the leftists. The regime was totally closed to the publications using the Kurdish language or those which were leaded only by the Kurds who were considered to be making political claims.

Under these circumstances, political claims-making on the Kurds was mainly shaped on three grounds after the initial years of the 1960s. The first one was "TKDP" (Democratic Party of Turkish Kurdistan) which was established in 1965 illegally and Kurdish nationalism was the central theme in its ideological framework. More elaborately, the TKDP was "purely nationalist and unwilling to examine the inherent tensions between ethnic nationalism, social traditionalism and social development" (McDowall, 1997: 406). Moreover, the social base of this illegal political party was tradesmen, Kurdish notables and a segment of the Kurdish intellectuals (Kutscrhera, 2001: 394-95) in addition to clergy of the Kurds in Turkey (Ballı, 1991: 604). As an illegal political party, TKDP struggled for getting organized with a clandestine cell system while these cells could not be proliferated by new ones and largely remained without engaging political activity (Ballı, 1991: 186)[15]. Nevertheless, according to Lutfi Baksi, this political party had a considerable support base across the Kurdish region, not yet mobilized.

The Kurdish nationalists who were mainly inspired from the Iraqi Kurdish movement had more radical demands in their party program in comparison to the Kurdish political entrepreneurs working in the TİP. The TKDP was asking for autonomy for the Kurdish region in Turkey, in terms of demanding a federation, independent for any kind of political, economic and cultural activities in that particular region (see Ballı, 1991: 603). It is possible to state a few reasons regarding

[15] This is also confirmed by Lütfi Baksi (2008).

the reasons behind the TKDP's incapability to articulate a mobilization. The first one was about its strong ties with the Iraqi Kurdish movement which made the TDKP more fragile against the political situation of the KDP in Iraq which started to get worsened after 1961 and also forced KDP not to engage in actions which would disturb its relations with the Turkish state. The second reason was about murder of Faik Bucak by an unknown perpetrator while he was the general secretary of the TKDP. The last main reason was about the TKDP's lacking organizational resources and not having a clear understanding of how to get organized (Baksi, Lütfi, 2008). Due to illegal-clandestine organizational characteristics of the TKDP, its' opportunities to create a well-functioning mobilizing structure was also quite low unlike the TIP.

The second vein was the YTP, a legal right-wing political party consisting of the Kurdish elites, and it gained a considerable vote in the first half of the 1960s, lost its voting base through the 1970s. While Yusuf Azizoğlu who was the leader of the YTP was the minister of health in the early years of the 1960s, he was accused of committing to Kurdism (*Kürtçülük*) by one of the parliament members due to his diverting the state investments mainly to the Eastern Turkey. Despite this event provided a considerable fame for Azizoğlu among the Kurds, Azizoğlu's response to accusations was away from including any connotations on the Kurdish identity and he expressed his loyalty to the Turkish State during the discussions in the parliament (Burkay, 2001: 148). The support for the YTP in the Kurdish region diminished gradually in the following years in parallel to the TİP's gaining acceleration in terms of mobilization and getting votes of the Kurds.

The third vein of politicization for the in the 1960s was Workers' Party of Turkey claimed to have a socialist ideology while allowing to emergence of a

political space for the Kurdish political entrepreneurs. This can be interpreted as a political opportunity for the Kurds in terms of having a chance to engage in making political claims. In order to delineate the relations between the TİP and the Kurds, it can be fruitful to discuss the following question: "How the Kurdish contention was framed by the TİP and what kind of collective actions were generated within the TİP regarding the political-claim making performances on the Kurds?" After the TİP was established in 1961, a number of Kurdish intellectuals applied for organizing a branch of this political part in Diyarbakır. Nevertheless, it was still ambiguous until 1963 how the political center of TİP was framing the Kurdish contention and this ambiguity lessened after Gaziantep congress of the party (Ekinci, 2004: 273). In this congress, the leader of the party, M. Ali Aybar stated that:

> "We have a challenging question: there are millions of people in the Eastern and Southeastern region of Turkey speaking Kurdish, Arabic and/or belonging to Alevi sect… This issue has different dimensions on historical, ethnic, judicial grounds, in addition to interests of Turkey and humanity which prevail over these dimensions" (My translation, see Ekinci, 2004: 274).

Within the same speech, Aybar emphasized equality for the whole citizens in Turkey by relying on the constitution (Article no.12) which ratifies that there should not be discriminations among the citizens on the basis of religion, language, race, class and segment. Moreover, Aybar underlined necessity of alleviating underdevelopment of the Eastern and Southeastern regions until these citizens feel in their hearts that they are true people of Turkey and do not follow internal and external adversaries (Ekinci, 2004: 274). Keeping in mind the limits of political regime in that period, the existence of TİP as an influential ally constituted a *political opportunity* for the Kurdish movement in Turkey even it was speaking about the Kurds merely with relying on the *discourse of citizenship*.

Until 1967, the Kurdish political entrepreneurs in the TİP engaged merely in political activities aiming to get votes in the local and general elections. Until the Eastern Rallies initiated by the TİP, means of practicing contentious repertoires were almost absent in the Kurdish region. During these campaigns of the TİP in the region, various forms of propaganda were used for the first time such as speeches open to public, pamphleteering, bill-sticking and radio broadcasting (Burkay, 2001: 165, 170, 203). Concerning the Kurdish region, in 1963 elections, the main theme in framing of the TİP was the need for a land reform which aimed to develop an opposition to unequal land distribution in addition to gaining the supports of the exploited agricultural workers (Ekinci, 2004: 276-283). This was an extension or reinterpretation of the TİP's framing the Kurdish question as a matter of provision of the social and economic rights of the Kurds. However, there was not a serious organizing structure within the TİP in the Kurdish region to develop a sustained form of contentious actions.

After the general elections in 1965, the TİP could succeed to have 15 seats in the parliament while 4 of these parliament members were elected form Kurdish provinces like Diyarbakır, Kars, Şanlıurfa and Malatya. This happened as an outcome of the national balance system (*milli bakiye sistemi*) as a voting evaluation method which was a complex system favoring small scale parties to have seats in the parliament. In relation to this, it is not possible to claim that the TİP put forth its political campaign in the region without facing any repressive measures. According to the memoirs of Kemal Burkay who was the representative leader of the TİP in Tunceli, the local authorities attempted to prevent political campaigns of TİP for numerous times in various places (see Burkay, 2001: 164, 204).

Analyzing differences of political ideas on the Kurdish question among the 'Easterners' (*Doğulular*) [referring to Kurdish political entrepreneurs in TİP] and the central party administration will be beneficial at this point. According to Ekinci, who was one of the Kurdish political entrepreneurs and also the general secretary of the TİP for three years:

> "… Turkish intellectuals were either totally unaware of the Kurdish question or not recognizing the urgency and importance of the Kurdish question for the sake of democracy. Therefore, Turkish intellectuals did not make effort to educate the members of the party about the Kurdish question and were not sensitive enough to organize campaigns for appropriating Kurdish question to the society" (My Translation, Ekinci, 2004: 288).

In other words, the TİP had a heterogeneous political and organizational structure regarding party politics to be pursued about the Kurdish question. The Easterners clique mainly initiated claim-making performances about the Kurdish people from a socialist perspective. This bifurcation in the TİP can also be understood when considering that the Eastern Rallies was planned without a dialogue among the Easterners and the central administration of TİP (see Burkay, 2001: 205) although the TİP leaders gave speeches in these rallies thereafter. Consequently, it is possible to claim that there was a tacit dissidence between the Kurdish intellectuals and the Turkish socialists in the TİP (Ekinci, 2004: 287). More importantly, the Easterners in the TİP were not homogeneous either in terms of their stance toward socialist program of the TİP and Kurdish nationalism. In relation to this, the TİP could also gain the sympathy of some Kurds who were traditionally religious (see Ekinci, 2004: 283-84, Burkay, 2001: 160) and possibly supporting the TKDP in status quo. Rivalries emerged due to this tension among the socialists and patriots (*Yurtsever*) in Diyarbakır and even these patriots who declared themselves as nationalist broke with the TİP after the closure of the party in 1970 (Ekinci, 2004: 302). Overall, the TİP as

an arena was subject to a struggle between the socialist Easterners and nationalist TKDP members in the local context.

2.6. The Eastern Rallies: Neither Pure Economism nor Political Program-Based Kurdish Nationalism

The Eastern rallies emerged as a result of interactions among the Turkish nationalists/ right-wing actors, the TİP cadres and the Easterners. Two ultra-nationalist political magazines (*Milli Yol* and *Ötüken*) published articles which were threatening the Kurds to remain silent – after the entrance of the TİP into parliament- or they would be subjected to deportation as the Armenians and Greeks had been exposed to in the past (see Beşikçi, 1992: 65-66; Burkay, 2001: 202). These threats were responded via a declaration signed by 19 Eastern Higher Education Associations stating that nobody would dare to expel the people [referring to the Kurds] who have been living on these lands since the old ages. This declaration also emphasized that their intention was to consolidate brotherhood and unity via relying on the constitution of the state but not to formulate an "Eastern question" in Turkey (Beşikçi, 1992: 65-66). This debate did not end after the declaration. The racist threats were used by the Kurdish political entrepreneurs for a legitimate base to foster political claims-making performances known as the Eastern Rallies (see Burkay, 2001: 202). These rallies started in Silvan and were repeated in Diyarbakır, Siverek, Batman, Tunceli (Dersim), Ağrı, Lice and Ankara in addition to meetings in other towns and provinces in the Kurdish region (Ekinci, 2004: 306). Although the TIP initiated these meetings, some of them were organized by the local organization committees (see Ekinci, 2004: 306) with involvement of the TKDP.

The framing of these rallies included emphasis on the underdevelopment of the "Eastern Region" of Turkey, opposition against feudalism in the Kurdish region,

unequal land distribution and repressive actions of the Turkish state against the "eastern people" (Beşikçi, 1992: 24-25). In order to understand how the framing proposed by the TİP was ideologically and strategically driven, there is need to develop a more detailed framework. It was the first time that a legal political party claiming to have a socialist program was established and also opened a political space for the Kurds. Therefore, in order to prevent transition to the *forbidden* zone of politics, the TİP and the Easterners in that party had to strategically frame their ideological claims. Bounded with the socialist understanding of the 1960s, they abstained from an emphasis on the ethno-national rights of the Kurds. This argument does not claim that the Easterners in the TİP had a secret ethno-nationalist agenda. It emphasizes the cautious attitude of the TİP to create a mobilization via remaining loyal to the zone of tolerated performances. In relation to this, the cautious approach of the TİP is evident when taking into account the banners used during rallies stating that "*The Easterner! Work and toil for your rights. Unity does not deteriorate by claiming for the rights*" (see Beşikçi, 1992: 25, Burkay, 2001: 205). Actually, the rival parties against the TIP attempted to use an anti-propaganda based on anti-communism while also accusing the TIP for creating turmoil in the Kurdish region. Therefore, it is possible to say that the framing of the TIP which also became a ground for the Eastern Rallies emerged as an outcome of the interactions between the right-wing parties, limits of the tolerated performances by the Turkish State and a socialist program framing underdevelopment and feudalism as the main conflicts in the Kurdish society of Turkey.

Understanding how ideological and strategic choices influenced framing of the contention after the Eastern Rallies will be easier in case of looking at reactions of the other political parties and the Turkish state against these collective actions. In

this regard, these rallies were considered by the leading columnists as propaganda of Kurdism and separatism (Burkay, 2001: 205). More importantly, the RPP and the ultranationalist right-wing opposed to these rallies while the AP carefully watched these rallies and accused the organizers with separatism and treason to Turkey (STMA, 1988: 2130). In relation to this, the Justice Party also started counter meetings which were fostered by the parliament members of the AP elected from the Kurdish region (Burkay, 2001: 206). In Erzurum, the ultra-nationalist right-wing organized Anatolian Rising Rally (*Anadolu Şahlanış Mitingi)* which gathered people around the slogan of "Before Our Country and Religion is Lost, Act Now!" (*Gitmeden Din-İman, Mahvolmadan Vatan, Davran*" (STMA, 1988: 2130). These interactions among the Turkish leftist and the right-wing movements were predecessor of upcoming years which witnessed a heightened level of conflict in Turkey. On the other hand, although the TİP had strategically positioned its framing against accusations regarding the Kurdish ethno-nationalism and separatism, this cautiousness was not enough to prevent right-wing actors' exploiting political arena with mainstream rightist discourses pertaining to the protection of 'order' against demands for change in characteristics of regime.

An elaborate analysis of the framing of the Eastern Rallies shows that dissidence between socialist Kurdish intellectuals in the TIP and the Kurdish nationalists linked to TKDP also became apparent during the rallies. Nationalist challenges against the Easterners in TIP became apparent especially during the last phase of Eastern Rallies in Ankara, which was organized by the right-wing Kurdish nationalists (Arslan, 2004: 92-94) in addition to their being part of rallies in various cities and towns. This split shows that it is noteworthy to question whether people who participated and supported these rallies were utterly motivated by the framing

proposed by the TIP. In order see how the Kurdish ethno-nationalist sentiments were a factor for the people to be mobilized, it will be beneficial to consider Osman Aydın's recollection of the first rally in Silvan:

> I was an independent speaker from the political groups. There were activists from the TIP and the KDP. There were 16 speakers and 5-6 of them were from the KDP. A Turkish activist and I were independents while the remaining people were from TIP. I was the 14th speaker after T. Ziya Ekinci. All speakers were analyzing the problem from the economic perspective. It was my turn and I told two main things. Both of them attracted amazing attention into an extent that I could not foresee. Applauding continued for minutes and I even forgot my speech due to my excitement. Firstly, when I started my speech, I told that 'I brought greetings from your Kurdish brothers from *Karakoçan'*. There were approximately 30 thousand people which were a considerable mass in that time. The word of 'Kurdish' ecstasized the crowd and thereafter, voicing salutes brought from the speakers' hometowns was repeated and even became a kind of slogan in the forthcoming rallies. Secondly, I told that the question is not economic or a matter of interest. I stated that the question is a conflict about the rights. I continued 'The Kurds have rights and the Turkish state is not recognizing these rights. It is not only about the economic interests of the Kurds which are not supplied by the Turkish State' (My translation, Aydın, 2008).

Relying on the way that crowds reacted to the use of a political language including words like "Kurdish", it is necessary to pose the following question: *how* and to *what extent* the collective action frames and the motivations of the participants were ethnicisized during the Eastern Rallies? While there is no clear cut answer for this, it is possible to state that participants of the rallies were interested about performances regarding the Kurdish ethno-nationalist sentiments. Understanding influences of various actors about construction of contentious action frame during the Eastern Rallies can be more grounded by referring to the DOC scholars: "Entire episodes, their actors, and their actions are interactively framed by participants, their opponents, the press and important thirds parties" (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001: 45). Considering the framing of TIP and the Easterners within the TIP, Kurdish contention was interpreted and manifested within the limits of social rights discourse

and mainly in line with a socio-economic underdevelopment context. However, the framing of the contention in the Eastern Rallies was subject to changes and challenges as the TIP had opened a political space for the TKDP and protestors showed their sensitiveness about speeches voicing claims-making over Kurdishness.

Finally, the Eastern Rallies played an important role considering the process of *boundary formation* in the context of political identity construction in the Kurdish movement. One of the essential components of the *boundary activation* mechanism is about catalyzing "us and them" distinctions (Tilly, 2003: 32). Framing of the Kurdish contention during the Eastern rallies attempted to voice us-them distinction on the basis of the claim that people living in the Kurdish region are exposed to a different socio-economic regime. This difference was manifested with the dichotomy of "*underdeveloped, discriminated, oppressed and ignored East of Turkey*" and the "*invested and developed West of Turkey*". Drawing us-them boundary did not happen explicitly over Kurdish identity with a clear-cut political program, however, some of the organizers and speakers also framed the ethno-political content of the Kurdish contention.

2.7. The Emergence of DDKO: Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Centers

In 1968, the Justice Party government started to be less tolerant against the leftist movement in Turkey when it started to reach a noteworthy political power. The strategies of the government for struggling against growing leftist and/or student movement happened on two main grounds. The first strategy was to expose the leftist movement to the repressive policing practices. This strategy became apparent when a wave of contention emerged during the anti-imperialist protests generated by university students against the arrival of the Sixth Fleet of the USA Navy to Istanbul. The second vein of counter-leftist strategy of the government was toleration of illegal

and armed factions in the ultra-nationalist para-military forces which generated political violence by targeting the leftist movement actors (Eroğul, 1992: 153).

Narrowing down in scope of democratic implementations after 1968 affected the Kurdish movement too. In this year, the Turkish State arrested 15 members of the TKDP due to their illegal activities which also included its central committee members and seriously harmed to the organization structure of the TKDP (Ballı, 1991: 606). Overall, it is possible to state that a rapid regime change occurred in Turkey in the period from 1968 to 1972 which resulted with the emergence of rapidly shifting opportunities/threats. Charles Tilly offers that power-holders tend to apply for proven performances like repression of challengers while challengers focus more on developing novel forms of struggle in order to overcome the authorities (Tilly, 2006: 44). It is possible to explicate Tilly's argument to 1968-1972 period of Turkey which would show that both socialist movement in Turkey and claims-making performances related to Kurdish contention witnessed a degree of mobilization but repressed by the military intervention in 1971. While new forms of struggle were diffusing to various sectors of the society, Kurdish university students started an important move by establishing the *Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Centers* (DDKO) in that period of heightened conflict.

While the ideological differences in the Turkish leftist spectrum were burgeoning, the Kurdish movement also started to get transformed by initiation of Kurdish university students and intellectuals. On that point, the following question will be illuminating: "Why did DDKO emerge as a separate organization from the TIP?" Some of the analysis suggests that this happened naturally after the Eastern

Rallies and the Commando Operations[16] which created a level of radicalization in the Kurdish movement in terms of transition from demanding "cultural rights, economic investments and social justice" to "class struggle" and defining the Turkish State as a source of oppression on the Kurdish people and also being dependent on the imperialist powers (Bozarslan, 2007: 1176). Nevertheless, this analysis does not pay enough attention to the reflections of changes happening in the Turkish leftist movement on the Kurdish movement and interactions came after this division affecting the KM, the emergence of DDKO per se.

Through the end of the 1960s, Turkish leftist political spectrum lost its unity in which TIP was like an umbrella-like political institution since the beginning of the 1960s. The main source of fractionalization was about the revolutionary strategy to be employed that emerged in parallel to examinations about political and socio-economic structure of Turkey from a socialist prism (Yeğen, 2006: 168). While TIP continued to keep its belief about realizing a socialist revolution (*Sosyalist Devrim Tezi- SD*) with using parliamentary channels, thesis of 'National Democratic Revolution' (*Milli Demokratik Devrim Tezi- MDD*) was proposed by Mihri Belli as another strategy to be employed. According to this strategy [MDD], the mission of the revolution was considered to be realizing independence of Turkish nationality by eliminating any forms of feudalism and imperial subordination (STMA, 1988) in a way leaning towards Turkish nationalism. This MDD fraction came out of the *Yön* movement which targeted a revolution with a military coup and was recognizing cultural rights of the Kurds while opposing self-determination right of the Kurds in Turkey (see Yeğen, 2006: 168-69).

[16] Commando operations as a repeated repression practice took place in the Kurdish region in years of 1970 and 1971. These operations will be analyzed in detail in the next section titled as "DDKO and The Commando Operations".

In 1967, after the establishment of the Federation of Thought Clubs (*Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu*, FKF) covering a considerable segment of left-wing political power among university students, a new approach emerged within the left which was more impatient about realizing a socialist revolution and screaming for a "revolution as soon as possible". This tendency was not compatible with the TIP which was dedicated to struggle within the limits of a legal framework determined by the political regime (Ünüvar, 2007: 825). A similar situation was also dominant within the Easterners clique of the TIP which aimed to keep the Kurdish dissent within the *tolerated* zone rather than resorting toward a more radical repertoire of contention.

Both of the political entrepreneurs proposing the SD thesis or the MDD thesis aimed to get support of the Kurdish university students and obstinately insisted on the Kurds for choosing their side.[17] Nevertheless, Kurdish university students were struggling for a campaign for *coordination* of associations and student dormitories built on the basis of citizentry (*hemşerilik*), and called as Federation of Eastern Cultural Associations (Kotan, 2006). Therefore, emergence of the DDKO mainly went in line with a split among the student movement of Turkey enforcing the Kurdish students to choose a side and also some intentions about creating coordination among all Kurdish student dormitories.

First of all, in the early times, DDKO was considered to be a youth based organization leaded by mainly the university students (Güçlü, İbrahim, 2008) and also aiming to getting organized within the higher education circles (*DDKO Dava*

[17] In 1968, during the second congress of the FKF, students who were supporting MDD thesis gained the control of the FKF which resulted with FKF's joining into Dev-Güç (Revolutionary Power) which was a political platform aimed coordinating leftist intellectuals and university students in addition to military officials around the MDD thesis. Nevertheless, while Dev-Güç could reach a noteworthy political power in Ankara, socialist student organizations in Istanbul was much more dispersed and reluctant to join in this political platform (STMA, 1988: 2082). The year of 1968 witnessed a fall in the power of TIP due to the internal conflicts, a sharp increase in the level of contention including political violence in its repertoire, among the right-wing and the socialist student movements (STMA, 1988: 2083-85).

Dosyası, 1972: 33). The movement of the Kurdish university students was institutionalized around the DDKO and emerged after the leftist student movement started to be main agency in the left during and after 1968. The Kurdish university students, who had been in the socialist movement organizations before, were not comfortable with parliamentary strategies of the TIP for realizing a socialist ideological program and thus, DDKO was established by the students who had conflicts with the TIP (Ballı, 1991: 336; Arslan, 2004). In the May of 1969, DDKOs were firstly founded in Ankara and then Istanbul. After the DDKO was founded, it did not limit its scope only with higher education circles and also started a struggle for *brokerage* among Kurdish intellectuals and students with an aim of getting financial aid and forming cadres in both metropolises and the Kurdish region (see Kotan, 2006). This was followed by spreading to the Kurdish region in the late months of 1970 and beginning of 1971 with founding new branches in Diyarbakır, Silvan, Ergani, Batman, Kozluk, Beşiri, and Kulp (STMA, 1988: 2131). In order to grasp perceptions of the Kurdish university students about possible outcomes of political claims-making and its foreseen implications, İbrahim Güçlü, the former member of Ankara DDKO, explains this period as follows:

> When we established the DDKOs in Ankara and Istanbul, we had such a mentality: Establishing an open and legal organization for the Kurds was a frightening thing which nobody could venture to do so. The reason of founding DDKOs in Ankara and Istanbul separately and not proposing a federative administrative structure was about not attracting the attention too much on us. In case of assembling all DDKOs under the same institution, we were thinking that we would face with the attacks of the Turkish State. Nevertheless, we started to do it. After we established the DDKOs, a split appeared in the Easterners of TIP. When we intended to import DDKO into Diyarbakır, we encountered with the resistance of the TIP. While letting time to go on, we told them that we were going to do it even they would not be persuaded. Because, as the national reflex upsurges and the organizations proliferate, in everywhere, DDKOs were able to announce that they were ready to set up the organization by finding its new former members among

> the workers, villagers, unemployed people and landlords (My translation, Güçlü, 2008).

When the leading cadre of DDKO in Ankara and Istanbul aimed to import their struggle to the Kurdish region, although they met with the resistance of the TIP, political entrepreneurs in the DDKO did not give up from diffusing their struggle to the Kurdish region. More importantly, relying on what İbrahim Güçlü pointed out, it is possible to infer that the Kurdish region was almost an intact area in terms of the absence of social movement organizations that specifically made claims on the Kurdish contention. Although the Eastern Rallies were put forth by the initiation of the TİP in 1967, a considerable *social and organizational appropriation* of the people in the region was far from happening. When remembering that the strategy of the TİP for gaining support of the masses in the Kurdish region was mainly shaped by the political campaigns during the local or general elections, this argument sounds plausible. Only in Diyarbakır TİP had an organization called Socialist Culture Association (Ekinci, 2004) while attempts to found a similar organization in Tunceli had failed (Burkay, 2001). Consequently, considering the presence of the TİP in the Kurdish region till to the end of 1960s, it is not possible to say that a sustained form of contention could be developed by the TIP that would connect social sites to each other in a coordinated way and would put forth claims-making activities regularly.

Before analyzing the framing of the contention and repertoire of the DDKO, arguing about relations of the DDKO members with the socialist movement in Turkey will provide leverage for understanding the reasons of the organizational detachment of the Kurdish political entrepreneurs from the Turkish socialist movement. After 1968, political violence between the rightist and leftist movements reached to a considerable level and this process continued in the next years. Although most of the mobilized Kurdish students were positioned on a similar

socialist ideological ground with the Turkish socialist movement, their relations did not continue without contentions like the prior years, during the process of organizational detachment. Hamit Kılıçarslan who was an active member of the TKDP narrates the contentious period as follows:

> It was in 1969 or 1970, Grey Wolfs [the ultra-nationalist right-wing movement] attacked the Diyarbakır Student Dormitory which was located in Bahçelievler, Ankara. This dormitory asked for help from nearby faculties such as the Law and Political Sciences. In this period, Ertuğrul Kürkçü was the leader of Political Sciences Faculty Dormitory. He responded to the call for help by saying he would not provide even one militant or a gun for the Diyarbakır Student Dormitory. We, as the Law Faculty Dormitory, backed up to the Kurds in Diyarbakır Student Dormitory. In that period, we were perceived to be set apart because of our Kurdishness. Specifically, I witnessed a few fights due to the Kurds' detachment from the FKF. During the Nights for Siirt, Night for Viranşehir… When there were Eastern Nights, fights even with chains started to occur between the Kurds and the Turkish leftists (My Translation, Kılıçarslan, 2008).

Considering violent clashes between the Turkish socialist movement and the DDKO members, a spontaneous violent incident similar to Kılıçarslan's narration also happened in the first rally organized by the DDKO in Ankara. Mümtaz Kotan claims that Dev-Genç members attacked DDKO protestors by accusations like "separatist", "servants of imperialism" and "Puppets of Barzani" (Kotan, 2006). These events show that organizational detachment of the Kurdish student movement was not initially supported by the domineering Turkish left in Ankara either by the Dev-Güç which was following the MDD thesis within a Turkish nationalist framing (Kılıçarslan, 2008) or the socialists following the SD thesis (see also STMA, 1988: 2082). Therefore, although DDKOs had local alliances with the Dev-Yol in the following years (DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972: 16), their contentious interactions with the Turkish socialists strengthened their decisiveness about organizational detachment from the Turkish socialist movement.

While the Kurdish movement started getting organized for itself, changes in the political regime from 1969 to 1971 were indicating a heightened level of conflict. The wave of protests started in 1968 continued in mobilization of the university students, working class and villagers by deepening the rightist and leftist polarization in Turkey on a societal base (Eroğul, 1992: 154). The general election in 1969 was held under a political crisis environment with a low participation rate while not satisfying the TİP and causing a disappointment for the socialists suggesting parliamentary channels for their socialist program.[18]

Throughout 1970, the working class struggle could create a quite influential mobilization by demonstrations, strikes and occupations. Taking "15-16 June Events" (*15-16 Haziran Olayları*) into account, this working class struggle was quite troublesome even for the Turkish army which repressed these demonstrations via state violence (Ünüvar, 2007b: 832; Ahmad, 1995). In parallel to increasing political power of the working class and student movement which also started to act together, ultranationalist right-wing movement started to employ organized violence in commando camps which aimed to create *specialists in violence* with the motto of anti-communism (see Bora, 1991: 56-59). On the other hand, during the period of 1968-71, some of the cadres of revolutionary student movement went and returned from Lebanon where they were trained for guerilla warfare (McDowall, 1997: 409) which can be considered as transformation of *political entrepreneurs* to *specialist in violence* in the leftist movement. Overall, violent interactions between the state-backed right-wing (Eroğul, 1992), the leftist movement and the Turkish State resulted with a heightened level of conflict in the political regime. Moreover, in

[18] This strengthened two main tendencies in the leftist political spectrum. On the one hand, the MDD sympathizers expected a leftist military coup (STMA, 1988: 2109) and on the other hand, ideological and tactical radicalization of student movement started with Dev-Genç (Revolutionary Youth) and its segments to be fractionalized in the following period (see Erten, 2007: 846).

addition to this political crisis environment, an economic crisis emerged with the devaluation of the Turkish Lira and caused the governance of Justice Party to be more fragile against political crisis due to the leftist movements' favoring from this threat/opportunity spirals (see Keyder, 1989: 209-210). Overall, while the governmental capacity decreased considerably in this period, level of democracy experienced a similar situation.

2.8. DDKO and The Commando Operations

An important series of interactions between the would-be politicized Kurds, the Turkish state and the Kurdish movement happened in the process of Commando Operations organized by the Turkish Military throughout the year of 1970 in the towns and villages of Diyarbakır, Hakkari, Mardin, Muş, Erzurum and Van (STMA, 1988: 2131). These military operations were restarted in 1971 in Siirt, Mardin, Nusaybin, Batman, Tatvan, Baykan and Şirvan (DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972: 28-29). Although the Turkish state claimed that the purpose of the operations was related to searching for bandits in the region, this was far from reality; the range and form of the practices implemented by the commandos against the Kurdish people should be visited to support this argument. A serious wave of repressive actions of the Turkish State against the Kurds indicates that *protection* of citizens from arbitrary actions of the state -as a crucial component of democratic regimes- lost its ground in these years. DDKOs widened their repertoire by conducting research reports on the repressive practices, making rights violations to be broadcast in the mass media and with telegraphing notification to the president of Turkish Republic. According to these reports and bulletins: torturing, beating, lining the villagers in a military order, forcing them to take off their clothes, sexual harassments were in the performed repertoire of the Turkish army against the Kurds in addition to the murder of a

Kurdish villager during these military operations (see McDowall, 1997; STMA, 1988). It is possible to say that in addition to *attribution of threat/opportunity*, the DDKO could offer a novel repertoire for mobilization in comparison to the TİP by monitoring repressive actions of the Turkish State. In order to analyze components of this repertoire, it can be beneficial to look the text box below which shows the instruments in the repertoire of contention compiled from court records (DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972: 20-25) and in-depth interviews.

Contentious Repertoire of the DDKO

- Pamphleteering in Ankara, Istanbul and various towns and cities of the Kurdish region.
- Celebration of Newroz as the national festival of the Kurds.
- Organizing rallies and meetings in the Kurdish region against the Commando Operations of the Turkish Army.
- Publishing regular bulletins, distributed also in high schools in the Kurdish region, reflecting ideological and political framing of the DDKO.
- Organizing thematic seminars in the DDKO bureaus about Marxist ideology and the Kurdish language.
- Organizing the *Eastern Nights* (14 times) where Kurdish culture was performed with poems, songs and folk dances.
- Researching about the Commando Operations and writing reports to be publicized in their bulletins and in mass media.
- Organizing hunger strike.
- Publishing and distributing brochures regarding political events.
- Bill-sticking and distributing to cities and towns in the Kurdish region.
- Collecting money from sympathizers and affiliated political groups/persons.
- Telegraphing the president of the Turkish Republic (Cemal Gürsel) for protesting the Commando Operations.
- Publishing and selling postcards for financially supporting the Palestenian Al-Fatah.

Analyzing how the DDKO framed the Kurdish contention will be helpful for grasping the ethnicization in the collective action frame of the Kurdish movement. Based on the bulletins published almost every month, it is possible to determine four

prevalent elements in the framing of the DDKO. The first one was coding repression toward democratic rights struggle of the Kurds and working class as generated from an alliance of forces including the Turkish state, the bourgeoisies and imperialist powers (DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972: 25) by relying on a Marxist point of view. Secondly, DDKO performed an important opposition against the assimilation of the Kurds and voiced its dissent about restrictions on usage of the Kurdish language and the recognition of the Kurds (ibid, 1972: 31). For example, when Cemal Gürsel claimed nonexistence of the Kurdish language as an extension of the Turkish state's not recognizing the Kurds politically and culturally, the DDKO framed this as an evidence of national oppression on the Kurds (ibid, 1972: 31-32). Thirdly, protests against the Commando Operations occupied a central place within the framing of the DDKO in terms of developing an opposition against the arbitrary actions of the Turkish State against the Kurds. The fourth component was DDKO's considering underdevelopment of the Kurdish region as an outcome of deliberate and discriminative activities/policies of the Turkish State (1972: 27) and this ideological line clearly separated the DDKO's framing from the understanding of TIP.[19] Overall, the DDKO could develop a dynamic framing adjusted according to political changes shaped on the critical ground of Marxism in addition to voicing political and ethno-cultural rights of the Kurds. Nevertheless, DDKO did not manifest the national self-determination right of the Kurds in Turkey explicitly.

In addition to enlarging the repertoire of contention, the DDKO also attempted linking previously unconnected social sites in the Kurdish region by either establishing institutions in the towns and the cities of the Kurdish region or reaching propaganda materials to its sympathizers (DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972). While these

[19] Another component was DDKO's expressing its sympathy for national liberation movements in different parts of the world like Palestine, Spain, Indo-China (see Bozarslan, 2007: 1177).

activities can be considered within the scope of *brokerage* and *diffusion* mechanisms required for entering a *coordination* process, it is hard to state that DDKOs had a chance to achieve this. The main reason is the duration of DDKO's activities which lasted no longer than two years. In fact, DDKOs could remain active less than a year in the Kurdish region and even some of them less than six months. Therefore, DDKOs should be considered as an initial attempt for the creation of a mobilizing structure which could pose a new repertoire, entrepreneurships for brokerage and social/organizational attribution. The main difference of the DDKO from the TİP - regarding their political agendas about Kurdish contention- was related to DDKO's demanding a *certification* for the Kurdish political identity while the TİP did not explicitly engage in demanding political-cultural recognition of the Kurds until its last congress.

The answer to the question "Why did the Turkish Military organize these operations?" is generally responded with the Turkish State's fear of Kurdish national awakening in Turkey (see STMA, 1988: 2131, Burkay, 2001: 208). In these sources, changes in the political regime of Turkey and increasing role of the military in the politics after the beginning of 1970 are not considered as independent variables influencing political attitudes of the Turkish State elite toward the Kurdish question. From January of 1970 to the military intervention in March 1971, the Justice Party government was asked by the military to certificate its demands about recognizing the political power of the military and opening a political channel allowing the Turkish military to take more active role in shaping politics. This period also went in line with the politicization of the military ranks and the emergence of competing rightist and leftist cliques in the Turkish army for making a military coup (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992: 82-87). In this regard, the Commando Operations which started

exactly in the same period and targeted the Kurds should be considered as one of manifestations of the increasing weight of the military in the political regime as a means of intervening into the politics. More importantly, the Turkish military refused to collaborate with the Justice Party government to develop repressive strategies to cease the opposition developed by the socialist movement in Turkey (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992: 106). Therefore, this can be interpreted as a *division of political elites* about struggling against the challengers in the regime. Thus, the reasons of the Turkish military's acting independently from the AP government and employing military operations against the Kurds should be understood in this context (STMA, 1988).

The other ground for understanding the reasons behind practicing the Commando Operations is related with increasing the political power of the Iraqi Kurdish movement which can be considered as an Achilles heel of the Turkish state affecting perception of the Turkish political/military elites regarding the Kurdish contention in Turkey. On that point, McDowall states that "The Baath-Barzani Accord in March 1970 heightened Ankara's apprehensions concerning its own Kurds, and this may have partly accounted for the new wave of brutality" (1997: 409). Overall, while the Kurdish movement in Turkey had not reached a considerable political power until 1970 that would frighten the Turkish state elite to engage in an extensive wave of military operations against the Kurds. Therefore, in addition to Kurdish claim-making activities, other reasons like the changing political environment in Iraq and demands of the Turkish military to have a more active role in politics became effective too.

2.9. The Seeds of Radicalization in the Kurdish Movement

Although the DDKO claimed to mobilize the Kurds in a legal framework, its activities did not merely remain as *tolerated* performances and passed through *transgressive* forms of contention by entering to *forbidden* zone (see Anter, 2000: 218). This resulted with the arrest of the leading DDKO cadre in October 1970 (McDowall, 1997: 408). About two weeks later, in 29th of October, a crucial decision was announced in the fourth congress of the TİP stating that "There is a Kurdish people in the East of Turkey… The fascist authorities representing the ruling classes have subjected the Kurdish people to a policy of assimilation and intimidation which has often become a bloody repression" (Entessar, 1992: 89-90). The significance of this decision was its being the first time for a legal party acclaiming the presence of the Kurds in Turkey and opposing assimilation while voicing repressive activities of the Turkish state.

While TİP was framing the Kurdish question fixated to socio-economic underdevelopment context until its fourth congress, this radical move can be considered as a surprising step. An elaborate analysis of the story behind this congress decision reveals an important political party in the history of Kurdish movement leaded by Sait Kırmızıtoprak (Dr. Şivan) announced *Democratic Party in Turkish Kurdistan* (T-KDP) in 1970. Most of the delegates in the Easterners bloc of TİP had been appropriated by the T-KDP and decision mentioned above emerged as a result of the initiation of these members without consent of the leading cadre of the Easterners in the TIP (Burkay, 2001: 279). Therefore, it is not possible to say that a significant break emerged in the forth congress of the TİP considering leading cadre who had mainly initiated the Eastern Rallies (i.e. T.Z. Ekinci, K. Burkay). On the

other hand, this also signifies how a more radical illegal political party could be charming for the majority of Kurds organized in the TİP.

The organizational structure of the T-KDP could not last long due to the fact that its leader Sait Kırmızıtoprak was killed by Iraqi Kurdish leader Molla Mustafa Barzani's forces as a response to Kırmızıtoprak's murdering his rival Sait Elçi, the leader of the TKDP. However, analyzing ideological framing of T-KDP is still noteworthy not because of its overwhelmingly controlling Istanbul branch of the DDKO (Kotan, 2006) or influencing the TİP cadres. Rather, the most influential movement organizations in the 1970s were constituted by Kırmızıtoprak's followers within a similar framing of the Kurdish contention. Thus, the T-KDP's ideological framework can not be confined to a few years struggle and also deserves attention because of its locating an armed struggle into the center of its repertoire of contention.

T-KDP's ideological framing differs from the earlier Kurdish movement organizations in terms of its defining the Kurdish contention in Turkey. Main importance of the T-KDP's political agenda is related with its adopting the right of national self-determination into the Kurdish movement in Turkey within a Marxist framework and in the way that V. I. Lenin analyzed the question of nations and nationalism. In the purposes section of its program, the T-KDP makes following claim:

> Our party believes that the Kurds living in the Turkish Kurdistan have the right of self-determination and in order to reach this, stipulates recognition of the Kurdish nationality officially and retrieval of Kurdish national democratic rights as the essential requirements (My translation, Büyükkaya, 2004: 124).

In order to understand how Kurdish nationalism was framed by the T-KDP, looking at the program in a detailed way can be beneficial: "The foundation and driving force

of our ideology is our nationalism, namely our Kurdishness" (My translation, Büyükkaya, 2004: 125). While an emphasis on the Kurdish nationalism within the T-KDP's framing the contention is obvious, the nationalist perspective is also concretized with special references reconstructing the Kurdish history covering pre-modern times, the foundation of the Turkish Republic and more recent examples until 1970. In a similar vein, T-KDP claimed that the central conflict of Kurdish contention in Turkey is "internal national conflict":

> **Internal national conflict in Turkey** is the most important conflict in comparison to other internal conflicts and external conflicts. The presence of the Kurdish people (*Kürt Halkı*) and its being oppressed with assimilation has been an essential cause for the fascist powers to be in reign… In underdeveloped countries (Turkey, Iraq, Sudan, Pakistan and etc.), imperialist and fascist state has embarked upon denial and assimilation of the other nation in its boundaries in addition to economic exploitation under a chauvinistic nationalism. Going beyond the exploitation of underground and aboveground wealth of the enslaved nation, its history, culture, literature, language, customs-traditions, art and all national value judgments are denied and to be endeavored for their annihilation (My translation, *bolds in the original*, Büyükkaya, 2004: 119-120).

Without denying the significance of the class conflict, Kırmızıtoprak was considering national conflict as the essential conflict of the Kurdish society (Bozarslan, 2007: 1178). Moreover, while it is possible to discuss framing of the T-KDP with evidences, degree of support among the Kurds for T-KDP and its organizational power are debatable issues due to its clandestine form of organization. According to Lutfi Baksi, who was one of the initial cadres of the T-KDP and also got training in T-KDP's camp in the Kurdish region of Iraq, thousands of the followers of TKDP had been appropriated by Kırmızıtoprak (Baksi, 2008). Rather than having a discussion about its organizational power, it can be more plausible to focus on political violence as a part of the T-KDP's repertoire, in order to understand the legacy of this political entrepreneurship for the latter Kurdish movement

organizations. Unlike the DDKO's excluding armed struggle in its repertoire (Bozarslan, 2007, 1177), the T-KDP did not externalize use of political violence for their struggle. In order to understand this issue better, it is worthwhile listening to Lutfi Baksi's experiences in the camp of T-KDP where nearly 30 cadres were getting ideological and military trainings.

> When I arrived to the headquarter, two buildings had been completed. There were dorms, printing office, bureau of secretary and library. There were seminars on Kurdish language and socialism. Moreover, there were also briefings about military. These were about why Sheikh Said movement was defeated and the strengths or weaknesses of this movement. These discussions were made about all movements in Kurdistan. Our physical training included military marches and shooting practices (Baksi, 2008).

Although T-KDP could not find a chance to expand its struggle due to the death of Kırmızıtoprak and expulsion of his friends from the Iraqi Kurdish region, political entrepreneurs in his initial cadre played important roles in the Kurdish movement of the 1970s. In the meantime, Turkey underwent a military intervention in 1971 which resulted with toppling of the AP government and the emergence of military-led governments for two years. Reasons presented for the justification of the military intervention and the outcomes of this intervention should be examined in order to perceive the route of regime change in the early 1970s.

2.10. The Military Intervention and Outcomes of 1971

The reasons of the intervention constructed on the military discourse focused on "anarchy" in Turkey, "fraternal fighting" and "socio-economic unrest" within the declaration signed by the highest echelons of the Turkish military (Alatlı, 2002: 1). A similar vein of state discourse expression which also included the Kurdish movement is presented by McDowall by referring to the interior minister of Turkey in the following way:

> The rise of the extreme leftists and urban guerillas; the response of the extreme rightists and 'those wanting dictatorship'; and finally, the separatists question in the East where he said a large number of weapons had been found. He accused Mulla Mustafa as assisting separatists, and the latter of forming a Kurdish Independence Party (McDowall, 1997: 410).

The ways of legitimizing military intervention was subject to variations from different positions of the Turkish State while the one above did not have a concrete basis due to weakness of the Kurdish movement in Turkey. Nevertheless, reasoning related to Kurdish movement in Iraq can be taken into account in order perceive how discourse of separatism had capacity to serve military as a source of legitimacy.

The advent of military intervention was not a surprise and even an expected outcome considering political conjuncture in 1971. Actually, the main curiosity was about the characteristics of the military intervention which refers ambiguity of whether a rightist or leftist military intervention was about to took place. A leftist military intervention which was expected to happen in 11 of March did not occur (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992) and 12 of March became the date of the intervention. Thus, the close of democratic channels emerged again in the political regime of Turkey and Turkish military started to seeks ways of reconsolidating its hegemony.

After the Turkish military took control of the regime, it forced the AP government to resign and also initiated the constitution of a new cabinet under its control with assigning Nihat Erim as the prime minister. Within the initial months, Workers Party of Turkey (the TIP) was closed under the pretext that is violated the constitution by propagating communism and supporting Kurdish separatism (Ahmad, 1999: 177). Nevertheless, the new military-led cabinets could not be successful to prevent the spread of "anarchy" which was used for rationalization of the intervention. A wave of political violence was started by Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (THKP-C) including kidnappings of consul- general of Israel,

American and British soldiers and businessmen representing the Turkish bourgeoisie (see Alatlı, 2001: 15-30). These activities were responded to by the newly formed government with the imposition of martial law in 11 provinces of Turkey including some of provinces in the Kurdish region, metropolises and industrial areas. In this vein, all youth associations were closed down, all meetings and seminars of the trade unions were outlawed, release of two newspapers were abolished and a restriction implemented on publication and distribution of written materials considered to be inconvenient by the Turkish State (Ahmad, 1999: 180). In addition to these repressive practices narrowing down the zone democracy, most of the leftist and pro-Kurdish intellectuals and activists were arrested too.

To question the influence of 1971 military intervention on the Kurdish movement in Turkey is necessary for examining *how* and *why* the repertoire and ideological framing were affected by the practices of Turkish state. In this way, delineating ways of radicalization can be possible by analyzing the route followed by the Kurdish movement. Considering the trial of DDKO, for the first time in the history of Kurdish movement, a defense on collective rights of the Kurds was claimed by the DDKO cadre. This defense included a rereading of the history of Turkey over Kurdish contention with a strong emphasis on the Kurdish language aiming to prove existence of Kurdish people as a distinct ethno-national group (*Kürt Halkı*) in a more Kurdified agenda in comparison to the earlier period (Bozarslan, 2007: 1178-79). Overall, the DDKO still was not framing the Kurdish contention in Turkey as a matter of national self-determination. On that point, it is viable to ask this question: what kind of mechanisms caused the radicalization in the framing of Kurdish contention after the military intervention in 1971?

It is possible to examine potential answers to this question with an elaborate analysis of political atmosphere during and after the military intervention. Kurdish activists and intellectuals who had the chance to flee followed two main routes. While some of them went to European countries, a considerable segment of not yet arrested political entrepreneurs went to the Middle Eastern countries and especially to the Iraqi Kurdish region. Lütfi Baksi who was in the T-KDP camp after the military intervention says that many Kurdish activists came to the camp in the Kurdish region of Iraq to escape from getting arrested (Baksi, 2008) Zeki Okçuoğlu, who experienced this period in the Iraqi Kurdish region, claims that most of the Kurdish political entrepreneurs started getting affiliated with other Kurdish movements abroad (Syria, the Iraqi Kurdish region and Europe) and watching other Kurdish movements for the things to be done (Ballı, 1991: 181). Actually, in 1973, the master frame of the Kurdish movement in the 1970s, "colonialism thesis" was proposed in a grounded way by Kemal Burkay who went to Europe during the wave of political repression generated by the 1971 military hegemony (Bozarslan, 2007: 1179). Moreover, it is also possible to claim that T-KDP followers who initiated the formation of the DDKDs (Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations) in the second half of the 1970s interacted and engaged in the political and financial alliances with various Middle Eastern leftist movements including Iraqi Kurdish movement during this period (Büyükkaya, 2008). Consequently, taking the *supra* nation-state dimension of the Kurdish contention into account, repression of the Kurdish political claims-making performances in Turkey resulted in the Kurdish political entrepreneurs' meeting with other regimes and repertoires in the Middle East and the European countries which had a considerable effect on the Kurdish movement in Turkey throughout the 1970s.

2.11. Conclusion

This chapter covers historical analysis of the Kurdish movement in Turkey in order to discuss *why* and *how* it emerged and evolved in the period of 1920-1972. While this time interval witnessed early encounters of Kurdish contention with Turkish State during the consolidation of nation-state building in Turkey, political claim-making performances in the Kurdish movement emerged in the late 1950s and developed gradually until the early 1970s. Until this period, political entrepreneurs in the Kurdish movement performed a struggle either within the socialist movement of Turkey or with their own mobilizing structures (DDKO). In relation to this, the T-DKP, the nationalist wing in the Kurdish movement emerged with more radical demands in comparison to the previous legal movement organizations. However, all these mobilization attempts in the Kurdish movement were ceased by the military intervention in 1971 or due to the internal conflict in the movement organizations. Therefore, before the military regime of the early 1970s started reopening channels for parliamentary politics, the Kurdish movement did not reach a considerable mobilization. Nevertheless, both organizational and ideological resources initiated before the early 1970s started to play a significant role in the transformation of Kurdish movement in the 1970s. The next chapter will focus on the influence of the 1971 military intervention on the Kurdish movement and analyze the reasons behind ideological radicalization of the Kurdish movement with colonialism thesis.

CHAPTER III

FRAMING PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES IN THE KURDISH MOVEMENT AND CONTENTIOUS INTERACTIONS IN 1974-1977

3.1. Introduction

The advent of the militarist regime in 1971 had resulted either with the imprisonment of a significant percent of Kurdish political entrepreneurs or others fleeing to Middle Eastern countries or Europe. Regarding the struggle that begun in the second half of 1960s, demands for validation of Kurds' collective rights faced with denial again. The roots of ideological radicalization of the Kurdish movement in the 1970s should be searched in this specific historical period. Nevertheless, repression of the Turkish state on political and cultural rights of the Kurds did not prevent the Kurdish political entrepreneurs from continuing their struggle, although the struggle continued with framing more radical and revolutionary goals. After this period (early years of the 1970s) which was followed by the emergence of *colonialism thesis*, the Kurdish movement actors proceeded with a framing questioning the territorial integrity of the Turkish state.

The purpose of this chapter is to delve into how the Kurdish movement evolved in the 1974-77 period with reference to 1971-73 periods which did not witness a significant movement activity due to the repression of the militarist regime. Manifestation of the ideological radicalization of the Kurdish movement can be traced by analyzing the emergence of *thesis of colonialism* which mainly claimed that Kurdistan is a colony divided among nations-states subjugating the Kurdish

nation. However, this period also witnessed the birth of Kurdish movement organizations as political groups and political parties which significantly affected the emergence of the mobilization process with an increasing salience after 1976. On that point, this chapter will respond to the question of "How were the dynamics of mobilization shaped in the Kurdish region between 1974 and 1977?" To develop an answer, this chapter will specifically focus on the process of political group/party formation, construction of the framing of contention and the effects of socio-economic changes on mobilization in addition to examination of interactions among actors in the political regime of Turkey and the Kurdish region.

3.2. 1974-1975: What Happened at the Organizational Level?

In 1974, when a general amnesty was announced for the political prisoners – unquestionably this was a political opportunity structure for the Kurdish movement as well as the socialist movement in Turkey-, the Kurdish movement did not have *mobilizing structures* in the Kurdish region yet, in terms of legal associations and illegal parties.[20] Nevertheless, some of the Kurdish movement actors could grasp how the prison process and courts could be turned to an area of struggle. İbrahim Güçlü, as the former member of Ankara branch of the DDKO, sentenced to 16 years of imprisonment but let out after the general amnesty, remembers their perceptions after being released in the following way:

> On this date, we got out of prison with a great motivation. We had struggled, resisted for our personal, organizational rights in addition to the rights of the Kurdish nation. We had responded to the indictment of the court with a defense of two hundred pages, and submitted a defense of seven hundred pages to Supreme Court of Appeals. This became the source of motivation for re-organization when we were released from prison. In a manner of

[20] This indication does not mean that the Kurdish society in Turkey had no other powerful social networks and organizations in the 1970s. Networks based on tribal and kinship connections were quite dense and specific effects of such social structure on dynamics of mobilization will be analyzed in the next chapter.

> speaking, a team emerged [during the imprisonment period] (My translation, Güçlü, 2008).

What was this defense against? Turkish state was clearly claiming that the there is not a distinct ethno-national group called the Kurds. More importantly, prosecutors of this political case put an amazing effort for "proving" that the Kurds originated from a Turkish tribe and there is no language that can be called as Kurdish which was assumed to be a distorted form of Turkish language (DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972).

> Actually, the Kurdish language is neither a language that existed in history nor the language of anybody in history who belonged to a nation. It is evident that the Kurds are genuinely coming from Turkish descent. Because the original language of the Turks is Turkish, it becomes apparent that the genuine language of our Kurdish brothers is nothing other than Turkish (My Translation, DDKO Dava Dosyası, 1972).

This is a clear example of how the Kurdish identity was not recognized by the Turkish state. More importantly, as stated above, the Kurds were considered to be Turkish via relying on pre-modern or pre-historic periods. While a new decade was about the begin, the Turkish state did not show any sign of recognizing Kurds as a distinct group which indeed became a crucial reason for the Kurdish movement actors' attempting to act out of the legal field. Any claim-making performance about the Kurds was by definition illegal, therefore speaking against a non-existing ethno-national group was charged with committing to "separatism" which was requiring years of imprisonment.

While the militarist regime broke the hopes of Kurdish political entrepreneurs in the DDKO about the possibility of a democratic change in the regime of Turkey, a need for voicing individual and collective rights of the Kurds triggered emotional-motivational perceptions of the leading cadres of DDKO about continuing their

struggle.[21] In relation to this, just after the amnesty, in 1974, the leading cadre of the DDKO started an attempt of re-organization which resulted in the emergence of a new organization under the name of Revolutionary-Democratic Cultural Associations (DDKD), with three branches in metropolises of Turkey: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. While the foundation of the DDKD was declared, it claimed to be a continuation of the DDKO which were closed during the militarist regime (Arslan, 2006). The main purpose of the DDKD was to include different segments of the Kurdish movement actors in terms of nationalists, leftists and patriots who were struggling as different political groups (Güçlü, İbrahim, 2008). This call for constructing a collective political agenda did not happen with a well-defined ideological framework about the Kurdish question. After the establishment process, discussions were held in Ankara branch of the DDKD regarding the political principles to be pursued. Paşa Uzun says that one of the important themes was "How to develop approaches on the anti-colonialist principle?" and this discussion process resulted in the crystallization of different ideological tendencies which then determined the emergence of different Kurdish political parties in the mid 1970s (Uzun, Paşa, 2008). Nevertheless, neither DDKD nor other illegal organizations in the Kurdish movement had built centrally regulated organizational structures in the region yet.

Before the militarist regime was introduced, Easterners clique in the TİP, the DDKO, the TKDP and also the T-KDP were the movement organizations in which the Kurdish political entrepreneurs worked in. The Easterners clique in the TİP followed its own route and thus detached form the TİP just after it was closed down

[21] Considering the prisoners arrested due to being related with the DDKO, there was more than one defense prepared by different groups (Miroğlu, 2005: 230-33) and some of the prisoners prepared their defenses individually in terms of voicing collective rights of the Kurds (Arslan, 2006: 157-59)

by the militarist regime. Some of them started reorganization to an extent, during and after the militarist regime, via establishing the Socialist Party of Turkish Kurdistan (TKSP) under the leadership of Kemal Burkay.[22] Burkay explains the period of coming into being as follows:

> When we were in the prison in 1971-72, the idea of getting organized separately had emerged in our minds. We had discussions with our friends in the prison, even before the imprisonment with some of them, about establishing a Marxist political party in Northern Kurdistan. Then, when I went abroad, I realized the same tendency in our friends living in Europe, we discussed the same issue with them too. After we returned in 1974, six months passed and we established the party [TKSP] at the end of 1974 (Burkay, 2008).

On another vein, after the organizational competition in 1971 which resulted with death of leaders of the TKDP (Sait Elçi) and the T-KDP (Sait Kırmızıtoprak), a traumatic period started for the cadres of these political organizations (Güçlü, İbrahim, 2008). However, attempts of re-organizing the T-KDP continued in an unsettled flow especially by Ömer Çetin and Necmettin Büyükkaya who went to European countries and various Middle Eastern countries during the militarist regime and turned back to the Kurdish region of Turkey in 1975 after the amnesty. From 1975 to the early months of 1977, T-KDP faced with serious difficulties to expand its organizational structure (see Büyükkaya, 2008: 352-363) until the formation of the Workers' Party of Kurdistan (KİP- Kürdistan İşçi Partisi) in 1977. T-KDP cadres interacted with political parties such as the Revolutionary Party of Kurdistan in Iraq, Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Communist Party of Lebanon, and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in the period of 1971-1975 (Büyükkaya, 2008: 228-260). The importance of these interactions was the T-KDP cadres'

[22] It is important to note that, Tarık Ziya Ekinci, the leader of the Easterners clique did not participate in the TKSP and participated in TİP again after it was re-established in 1975.

encountering with national liberation struggles in the Middle East that affected the way that they framed the Kurdish question.

Before starting to analyze how interactions happened between the movement actors, would-be politicized masses in the Kurdish region and the Turkish state, it is necessary to sketch organizational developments that emerged in the region in the first half of 1970s. In the last quarter of 1971, Solidarity and Unification Association of All Teachers (TÖB-DER) was founded and started to play an important role -as an organizing structure- about developing a leftist opposition in all regions of Turkey. This organization also included the Kurdish populated region, especially in the last quarter of 1973 and the first quarter of 1974 (*Journal of TÖB-DER*, 1973, Issue [62]: 3; 1974, Issues [64]: 3, [65]: 3, [66]: 4). The emergence of educational institutions as an important site of contention in the region was an outcome of Turkish state's increasing investments in mass education as a part of state-making activities in the region after 1960. According to Sönmez's calculations, 20.2 percent of the primary schools, 14.1 percent elementary schools, 16.2 percent high schools in Turkey were established in the Kurdish region in the 1978-79 year of education (Sönmez, 1990: 172-73). Thus, the number of teachers in the Kurdish region was reaching to a considerable level throughout the 1970s in comparison to previous decades. In this way, the heightening level of contention in Turkey in the first half of 1970s was imported into the region via the branches of TÖB -DER which contributed significantly to development of contentious interactions in the region. Overall, in the period of 1974-76, while organizing structures of the Kurdish movement were not widespread in the Kurdish region, influence of the leftist opposition raised by various branches of TÖB-DER triggered dynamics of mobilization in the region. In other words, in the first half of the 1970s, the contention in the Kurdish region was not

merely shaped by the Kurdish movement actors but also came into being in parallel to the escalation of the leftist struggle in Turkey. In order to show the reflections of the increasing level of contention across Turkey, it is necessary to demonstrate the geographical distribution of the Kurdish movement organization in 1974 and 1975.

The first vein of Kurdish organizations were the ones working on the legal ground, especially DDKD branches located in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. As the DDKO was part of almost all contentions happening in the Kurdish region before the military intervention (1971), the branches of DDKD were also profoundly interested in the Kurdish contention in the region, even about the Kurdish movement in Iraq. Activities of DDKD continued until January 1976 when it was closed down by the Turkish state without declaration of any justification (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issue [9]: 96). In years of 1974 and 1975, DDKD failed to create an organization which would include different segments of the Kurdish political spectrum. The branches of DDKD in Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara were divided among different political tendencies which emerged as leading Kurdish movement organizations in the second half of the 1970s. Overall, DDKD became an important organization in which ideological discussions took place and Kurdish university students were appropriated into the struggle.

The second vein was mainly initiated with a legal framework by the Kurdish university students who had established hometown-based associations in the metropolises of Turkey under the name of Higher Education Circles of Muş, Ağrı, Van, Urfa, Bitlis, Viranşehir, Siverek, Siirt, Hakkari (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [1]: 79-80). The third vein of organizational ground was composed of illegal parties such as TKSP which was established in the late 1974 and started to publish a journal named “Özgürlük Yolu” (*The Path of Freedom*) beginning in June 1975 on monthly

basis. Meanwhile, in 1975, books about the Kurdish question started to be published by Komal Press which than begun to publish a monthly journal as well, called Rizgarî (Salvation), on 21 March, 1976. Moreover, the early cadres of the PKK were in Ankara in the first half of the 1970s and trying to getting organized within the university circles. On the other hand, parties such as the TKDP and T-KDP were in a period of turmoil and attempt of reorganization. Consequently, it is possible to call these years as group/political party formation years due to the fact that core cadres of the illegal political parties were in the phase of enlarging their central cadres.

Pursuing an analysis of political interactions in 1974-75 will show that emergence of movement activity in the Kurdish region occurred in parallel with a struggle performed by a set of actors on the left-wing, including Kurdish movement actors in the process of group/party formation or working for/within centrally established occupational associations. The following section will analyze the period after these two years in which the level of contentious interactions increased in the region.

3.3. Contentious Interactions: The Kurdish Movement in 1974-75

In 1974, RPP's establishing the government triggered political violence that was generated by the ultra-nationalists violence specialists (*Komandolar*) who were organized within the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) in order to target the left-wing political actors and institutions (see Ahmad, 1999: 204). After 1974, this ultra-nationalist movement -inclined towards fascism- achieved a linear mobilization with pursuing a strategy of gaining power in the streets via getting support of traditional middle-classes having troubles with the process of transition to capitalism (Bora,

1991: 61). The coalitional government established by the RPP and MSP (National Salvation Party) reached its end in September 1974 which left Turkey without a stable government. At the end of March 1975, the first government of the National Front Coalition was established including all right-wing parties in the parliament such as Justice Party (AP), Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and National Salvation Party (MSP). Turkey was going to experience an increasing political and societal polarization among leftist and rightist camps after this right-wing cabinet started to be in power. From all kinds of state institutions to occupational associations and organizations, a spread of politicization started and *competition for power* in various social sites continued until to the end of 1970s, which unsurprisingly influenced Kurdish region too.

In order to make sense of contentious interactions that happened in the Kurdish region in 1974 and 1975, one needs to examine the *socio-political regime* in the Kurdish region. I offer this analytical concept in order to refer to a zone in which set of repeated interactions happen between the Turkish state and the people (not necessarily including movement actors) living in the region. The region has been populated overwhelmingly by an ethnically distinct group of people whose ethno-cultural identity was not recognized by the Turkish nation-state and this region historically differs from other regions of Turkey due to witnessing considerable ethnic contentions for various times.[23] More importantly, various societal differences of the region from other parts of Turkey were distinctive such as persistence of pre-capitalist relations over changing forms of feudalism and the Kurdish region was also being subjected to a different mode of state-society relations due to belonging to an

[23] The concept of "political regime in the Kurdish region" is a revised form of "political regime" used in the contentious politics scholarship. Rather than using this term for reifying Kurdish question in Turkey, this notion aims to underline that state and society relations had historically been different in the Kurdish region.

unrecognized ethno-cultural identity. Furthermore, the presence of millions of people with similar ethno-cultural backgrounds living on the different sides of borders which divide four nation-states from each other was creating a peripheral zone prone to security problems in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Differentiation of state-society relations in the Kurdish region has encapsulated set of specific conditions mentioned above which can be grasped both historically. For example, "repressive actions of the state" is an indicator of socio-political regime difference in the region, for pre-1970s period (see Erdost, 1987: 178-187; Bozarslan, 2002: 159-170).

One of these socio-political conflicts producing repeated encounters between the Kurdish people and the Turkish state in the 1970s was conflicts pertaining to border issues. The initial and most common cause of border conflict used to be the smuggling of various consumption and commercial goods from Turkey to neighboring nation-states or vice versa. While large-scale smuggling activities were mainly favoring the profiteering groups in the region (see Beşikçi, 1992: 274-77), less organized forms of smuggling activities were also widespread in border cities as a result of economic hardships (Bozarslan, 2002: 47-49). The smuggling was a quite risky business because of requiring trespassing mined zones. More importantly, smuggling activities required a segment of smugglers (known as bandits) carrying arms due to their being responsible for the protection of commodity transfers (Beşikçi, 1992: 283). Overall, the border conflict was one of the significant zones of contentious interaction between the Turkish state and the Kurdish people, in which arbitrary actions of the state -such as execution- happened in the 1970s. The importance of these encounters is that Kurdish movement organized collective actions against these repressive practices of the Turkish state and framed this issue from within the colonialism thesis.

In December of 1974, 20 Kurds were executed by Turkish soldiers in a smuggling-related conflict after being arrested in Viranşehir (Urfa). (*Roja Welat*, Issue [1]: 4).[24] However, the event of the smugglers' execution was not considered as a simple matter related to smuggling, rather, this was framed by the DDKD as a new aspect of repression and terror against the Kurds which has also been implemented in previous times (STMA, 1988: 2307). Nurettin Elhüseyni says that there were also claims about commissioned military officer saying "We are doing a natural form of birth control" (*Doğal nüfus kontrolü yapıyoruz*) in a provocative manner (Elhüseyni, Nurettin, 2007). Thereafter, a meeting was organized in the following days of the event as a reaction of the event and the approach of the military officer. However, the protest could happen under strict control of the Turkish State forces which may provide some insights about policing of the protest in the Kurdish region. İbrahim Güçlü narrates the day of the protest in the following way: "According to the state, communist Kurdists [*Komünist Kürtçüler*] were going to develop a rebellion in Viranşehir. That is why all intelligence units, helicopters and tanks were gathered in there" (Güçlü, İbrahim, 2008). Overall, the Kurdish movement was going to frame these kinds of repeated events throughout the 1970s as unjust practices and state-led repressions targeting Kurdish people not the people in the region per se.

Before *competition for power* among right-wing activism and the leftist movements in Turkey begun to increase steadily after 1976, both violent and nonviolent forms of contentious performances started to take place in the Kurdish region in 1975. The space where this competition for sovereignty happened included various state institutions, social sites such as cities and towns, in addition to struggles

[24] Some of the sources states the number of the killed people as 9 rather than 20 the event of the smugglers' execution was not considered as a simple matter related to smuggling, rather, this was framed by the DDKD as a new aspect of repression and terror against the Kurds which has been prevalent since the old times (STMA, 1988: 2307).

for expanding membership and political significance of their ideologically driven associations and trade unions. In relation to this, Ergun Aydınoğlu explains the purpose of the right-wing movement as follows: “The first duty of the MHP was attacking the left and workers’ movement and -preeminently to teacher’s and police’s organizational structures- to other occupational organizations/associations and preventing development of these which were considered to be ‘threatening’ by dominant powers” (My translation, Aydınoğlu, 2007: 404). In this regard, in the early months of the Nationalist Front (MC) government, the leader of the Nationalist Action Party, Alparslan Türkeş wanted to give a speech in Diyarbakır as the vice prime-minister. The aim of Türkeş was to open a political space for the MHP which had not a substantial base in this city which had strategic and symbolic significance for the region. Reaction of the Kurdish movement actors and other socialist associations against Türkeş’s attempt was a call for organizing a protest that would prevent this speech from happening.

During the preparation phase of the protest, in addition to Kurdish political entrepreneurs and political parties, Cultural Higher Education Association of Diyarbakır (DYÖKD), the TÖB-DER, the TÜM-DER, a parliament member of Diyarbakır from the RPP and various left-wing authorities started a campaign to persuade people for protesting the MHP for not allowing Türkeş to make his speech (Amedi, Kovan, 2008) 23 June, 1975. Before this day, handouts were distributed for calling people to the protest, persuasive speeches were given to the people in the coffee houses and face-to-face dialogues were realized - not only in the city center but also in the neighboring towns- in order to make people participate in this collective action (Tanrıkulu, Vildan 2008; Güçlü, İbrahim 2008). In order to understand how this opposition was met by the security forces and thus to grasp how

policing of the protest was handled, it can be beneficial to hear flow of the contention from one of the Kurdish movement actors.

> We had no guns. We thought that a peaceful protest was going to happen: we would go and shout our slogans and expect that Türkeş would not speak due to our protest. After we went there, polices and soldiers surrounded us. The commander said that this protest had no legal permission and we had to disband. Those on the front side said that 'We are using our democratic rights, we protest this guy and nothing else'. We were hand-in-hand and shouting in Kurdish as "Xelkê me, Werê Cem Me" (*Our people come near to us*) in order to make people to participate to us. However, as we were surrounded, people would not come to participate... Soldiers and policed had come with panzers. Discussions about disbanding were still continuing. The guy [from the security force] said that 'I am going to disband you'. We resisted, we hold hands of each other and told that we were not going to disband. Then, they attacked and hit us with their gunstocks. In five minutes we had to disband. Those gunstock blows were hitting on our heads and shoulders (Uzun, 2008).

In the following minutes, the security forces started firing on the crowd and Mehmet Aytekin was killed in that moment and lots of people were also injured (see *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [3]). Alparslan Türkeş could not make a public speech in Diyarbakır, however, violent clashes between the protestors and Turkish security forced continued through the day and night. In addition to perceiving Türkeş as a fascist participating into protest, movement actors were also aware that Turkish nationalism was against the national rights of Kurds (Vildan Tanrıkulu, 2008). Overall, Turkish security forces' *policing of the protest* (Della Porta, 1995) relied on repression of the protestors rather than allowing a peaceful demonstration to take place. The outcome of this event was considered as a response of "the people" against the "fascist attacks" which were going on for months (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [3]: 85). Actually, violent attacks of the MHP-led movement actors across Turkey as well as in the region was gaining a momentum: after a clash emerged during a theater play in Erzurum 30 people were injured, teachers who were

members of TÖB-DER were beaten in Bingöl and the workers of a leftist trade-union were targeted in Elazığ/Keban (see *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [3]: 60-72). For ultranationalists, the logic behind employing political violence was to cease development of the left in all parts of Turkey.

Lastly, another vein of collective action happened after an earthquake happened in Lice, Diyarbakır at the beginning September, 1975. This event was not framed merely as a natural catastrophe by the Kurdish movement and also other leftist associations in the region (especially TÖB-DER), the question at stake was the role of the Turkish state after the earthquake happened. The Turkish State and the right-wing government were perceived to be lacking ability to provide required aid for the victims of that earthquake. (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [5]: 8). More importantly, rather than just criticizing the government, movement actors and the TÖB-DER went to Lice and struggled for helping to the victims of the earthquake. In order to create awareness about negligence of the Turkish state, a march from Lice to Diyarbakır started in 20 of November and a demonstration was organized in Diyarbakır in 22 November, 1975. The main purpose of these demonstrations was to denounce the continuing negligence of the government to provide required housing for the victims of earthquake while the winter was about to come (see *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [6]: 90-92).

Consequently, an overview of the contentious interactions in these two years signifies two important points: first, in the 1970s, development of collective action in the Kurdish region occurred not only by the Kurdish movement actors dedicated to follow their own organizational structures, heightening level of contention in Turkey also contributed to these collective actions. Second, while Turkey as a whole was in a period of political polarization, during the process of *mobilization*, various

interactions exemplifying the mechanism of *competition for power* created important outcomes. After the leader of MHP, Alparslan Türkeş, was prevented from speaking in Diyarbakır, ultranationalist movement begun to employ more aggressive strategies in the region, they continued attempting for getting organized especially in certain cities via *activation of boundaries* corresponding to ethnic and religious differences in the region. On the other hand, in 1974-75, the Kurdish movement actors enlarged the extent of their contentious repertoire in relation to pre-military intervention period. While the DDKO mainly framed arbitrary military operations before the military intervention, all kinds of repressive actions and political and socio-economic incapability of the Turkish state regarding the region were added into their collective action frame. Overall, 1974 and 1975 should be considered as reorganization and group formation period for the Kurdish movement. Before analyzing influence of social movement organization on the dynamics of mobilization and ideological framing of the movement, influences of socio-economic factors should be reviewed.

3.4. Relations of Production/Distribution in the Kurdish Region, Investments of the Turkish State: How Did Socio-Economic Change Influence the Dynamics of Contention?

While developing an understanding about patterns of mobilization in the Kurdish movement concerning the 1970s, as a fruitful point of departure, it is viable to begin with exploring how structural factors influenced dynamics of mobilization. In order to weigh the impact of social change on the flow of Kurdish movement in the 1970s, it is necessary to examine issues such as advances of capitalism and state-making in the Kurdish region, production and distribution relations, urbanization and migration. In other words, the question of "What is the relationship between social change processes and the emergence of collective action?" begs for an answer in the

1970s context of the Kurdish question. Nevertheless, this question does not seek offering an overall explanation for the dynamics of mobilization from the prism of social transformation. Rather, the significance of social change should be regarded as having influences on the arena where configurations of people, resources, and ends encounter with transformation (see Tilly and Tilly, 1981: 17).

Industrial strategy in Turkey between 1960 and 1980 relied on import substituting industrialization distributing state revenues according to developmentalist economic plans. This strategy of accumulation could provide a stable economic growth for Turkey until to mid-1970s but came close to zero and even negative growth rates through the end of this period. In parallel to this, investments of the Turkish state in the Kurdish region followed three main routes in that particular period (see Sönmez, 1989: 150-190). One of those was investing in state-making activities in the Kurdish region such as expansion of institutions for national education as one of the crucial wheels of assimilation policies; the other was building roads to ease transportation which would enable economic integration of the Kurdish region to the developing domestic market economy in Turkey. The second route was composed of investments in energy sector like dam-construction and mining whose main purpose was to compensate increasing need for energy in developing industry located in the west of Turkey. The third vein of Turkish state investment was channeled for agricultural subsidies and also for initializing state-led manufacturing industrialization which were driven by populist maneuvers and thus seldom completed (Sönmez, 1990: 177-182). The largest share of investments were occupied by the energy sector expenditures in that 20-year period and the state-making investments were close to agricultural and industrial expenditures which were unsurprisingly prone to fluctuations over time.

Overall, it is possible to indicate that period of 1960-1980 witnessed Turkish states' attempts for increasing capacity in the region while socio-economic gaps between the Kurdish region and developing areas of Turkey were re-produced and crystallized. On the other side, starting in the 1950s and continuing in the 1970s, a gradual transition to capitalist market relations from feudal production relations in agriculture was taking place especially in the South Eastern region. The reasons of the *gradual* transition should be understood in parallel to re-institutionalization of societal and economic elites (*Ağa*s) in the Kurdish society as an outcome of elites' engaging in clientelist relations which helped them to favor from privileges such as agricultural credits ensured by the Turkish state (Beşikçi, 1992: 25-39; Bozarslan, 2002: 61-62). In this vein, mechanization of agricultural production relations intertwined with already existing sharp inequalities in land ownership and created two main outcomes. [25] Initially, the landless peasantry or some of the peasants having small amount of land were pushed out of agricultural production relations and secondly, migration to urban areas emerged which turned these "urban poor" in the absence of job opportunities in the Kurdish region or migration either to developing industrial metropolises of Turkey or Europe started (Bozarslan, 2002: 26-35). Another crucial consequence of mechanization was its causing a decrease in the rate of tenant peasants while starting a process of dispossession -in line with dissemination of commodification of labor and proletarianization, per se. In the 1970s, "poor peasants" were still resisting to the dispossession and proletarianization

[25] By the aim of grasping the extent of uneven distribution in land ownership, it is useful to monitor the inequality statistically. In 1973, the share of "poor peasants" owning 6 percent of the total arable lands was 35.4 percent on household basis. Moreover, small producers having lands between 20-100 acres had the 42 percent of total arable land while the medium-scale producers were possessing 22 percent of the total cultivated land. On the other hand, share of large landowning families was 4 percent while having 30 percent of all land. On the one hand, especially in Urfa, Diyarbakır and Mardin, these rates representing inequalities were relationally too high (Sönmez, 1990: 168-170), and on the other hand, quality of the lands possessed by large landowners were better in terms of fertility due to being in plain areas (Bozarslan, 2002: 33).

while the tendency of large landowning class toward capitalist profit-making was strengthened and also buttressed their ambitions for having more lands (Sönmez, 1990: 166-168). Overall, it is possible to say that the class conflict in the Kurdish region was in a process of rapid transformation in the 1970s which unsurprisingly affected dynamics of mobilization in the second half of the 1970s.

In the period of 1965-1979, the share of the provinces in the Kurdish region in the national income either diminished or remained the same disregarding a few exceptional provinces experienced incremental upward shift (see Sönmez, 1990: 190). Questioning reasons of this economic worsening will allow us to develop some insights regarding the way that the Kurdish movement strategically framed this contentious zone throughout the 1970s. In addition to reasons mentioned above –the role of the Turkish state, the gradual transition to market economy and uneven distribution of land ownership- it is possible to examine another important dynamic in addition to inefficiency problems due to technical deficiencies related to modernization of agriculture. This dynamics was "flow of capital" from the Kurdish region to the developing west regions of Turkey (see Mutlu, 2002: 354, Sönmez, 1990: 225-230, Bozarslan, 2002: 57-58, Beşikçi, 1992: 280, 290). Insufficient infrastructural conditions, inadequate purchasing power of the people in the region and high profit opportunities in the developing areas of Turkey played significant roles for the emergence and continuation of the transfer of capital from Kurdish region to the west. Therefore, opportunities for an industrial development based on private initiatives in the region were also low because of the capital out-flow.

How socio-economic transformation of the region in 1960-1980 can be linked to the emergence and development of the Kurdish movement in the 1970s? Relying on the dynamic-interactive mobilization scheme suggested by the contentious politics

scholarship [see Figure 5 in Chapter I], social change processes directly influence the way that *collective attribution of threat or opportunity* happens. Namely, there is need to examine the relationship between social change and the way that particular social groups perceived threats or opportunities -which are also framed by the movement actors- and diffused through society in a re-interpreted or ideological clothe, by the aim of transforming would-be politicized masses into political subjects. Thus, it is noteworthy to analyze to what extent socio-economic change and its outcomes presented new resources and opportunities for the movement actors to develop particular contentious claims and trying to mobilize not yet politicized social groups and networks.

Regarding the role of the Turkish state about socio-economic underdevelopment of the region, the Turkish state left enough space for the Kurdish movement –which called for alleviating under-development of the region in the late 1960s- to operate within a collective action frame re-interpreting the fact that the Turkish state did not allocate its resources into the Kurdish region in a similar socio-economic pattern happening in developing regions. The reinterpretation resulted with claiming that the Kurdish region did not remain under-developed but was deliberately left under-developed as a result of the colonization of Kurdistan. In other words, Turkish state's socio-economic negligence accompanied by resource-extracting investment strategies paved the way for the Kurdish movement via creating opportunities to struggle with an anticolonial framing in order to gain support of the masses living in the least developed cities of Turkey, overwhelmingly. Moreover, the Kurdish movement actors also reinterpreted societal role of the large landowners (*Ağa*s) who were the main favoring segment in the region favoring from wide array of social inequalities and also engaged in political and economic

patronage relations with the Turkish state were. According to the Kurdish movement, their position in the society was considered to be functioning as the collaborators of the colonizers, exploiting labor and betraying to the Kurdish nation. Overall, unsurprisingly, the Kurdish movement framed various kinds of socio-economic conflicts existing in the society and also the main actors leading to these conflicts by relying on the prism of Marxist ideology accompanied with the understanding of the national liberation struggle.

Remembering that the scope of this study goes far beyond description of the socio-economic aspect of Kurdish contention, it would be too naive suggesting that under-development of the region had the primary role for the mobilization witnessed in the 1970s. Without analytically separating dynamics of mobilization into categories such as socio-economic factors and political ones, it is necessary to examine how the conflicts seeming to take place "only" in the realm of the socio-economic zone were framed and thus put into a political framework by the social movement actors/organizations to mobilize masses.

3.5. The Making of Ideological Framework in 1975-1977: Which Environmental Factors Led to the Emergence of Thesis of Colonialism?

What are the ideological origins of *thesis of colonialism*? Although Sait Kırmızıtoprak who was the leader of T-KDP, did not exactly state that Kurds are the colonial subjects in Turkey or in other nation-states, he claimed that oppression of the Kurds as a nation goes far beyond merely their political, economic and cultural subjugation and exploitation. According to Kırmızıtoprak, the oppressed position of the Kurds is considered to be a need for domineering and fascist powers for being able rule the whole country with a particular nationalist agenda (Büyükkaya, 2004: 119-120). In other words, the need of colonizer for its colonial subjects as a relation

of dependency had already been suggested by Kırmızıtoprak before the thesis of colonialism was proposed in 1974. Nevertheless, rather than searching for the ideological root for the origin of this thesis, it is more important to examine the dynamics that fostered thesis of colonialism to be a master frame for all Kurdish social movement organizations in the second half of 1970s. For now, it will be enlightening to begin with questing emergence of thesis of colonialism in a more general sense: "Why did the ideological framework of Kurdish movement resort to more radical demands in the 1970s?"

One way of answering this question is that radicalization in the framing was an outcome of Kurdish movement actors' trying to understand and contextualize the Kurdish question from within the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Thus, it should not be a surprising outcome for the Kurdish movement actors to interpret cultural-political non-recognition and socio-economic underdevelopment of the Kurdish-speaking population as 'existence of national oppression and exploitation of the Kurds in Turkey' and then contextualize the Kurdish question in a way that is fixed to *the right of nations to self-determination* which is a central theme in Leninism. However, this perspective only links how micro (individuals) and meso (movement organizations) levels of analysis interact with each other and then cause a change in the contentious action frame. It is a simple equation to say that the emergence and spread of framings can be explained by the struggles of movement actors to interpret the empirical one from an ideological prism. Thus, if this was the only explanation of framing construction, the influence of changing relations between meso- (SMOs) and macro-levels of analysis would be disregarded from our attentions, namely the effects of political changes in regime and large-scale transformations on the emergence and diffusion of framings. Therefore, without a careful examination of the

characteristics and absence or presence of certain political opportunities in the regime, it would not be possible to draw a complete picture of dynamics shaping contentious action frames movements.

For a movement to resort to *antisystem frame*, the opportunities created by a crisis of the dominant cleavages need to be "high" while opportunities for autonomous action within the polity should be "low" (Diani, 1996: 1056). Political opportunities for making claims on the ethno-political rights of the Kurds, namely building an autonomous action *within* the polity, were almost impossible for the Kurdish movement in the 1970s. As indicated before, the Turkish nation-state did not leave even a little space for claim-making about Kurdish identity -neither in the realm of politics nor in cultural ground while implementing forced assimilation policies in the 1970s too. From the beginning, Kurdish claims-making was within *forbidden* performances while Turkish national identity was *prescribed* for all citizens of Turkey. The closure of the regime should be regarded both as a political *opportunity* in the sense of facilitation in legitimizing the rightness of the claim and also a serious *threat* closing polity to the Kurdish political entrepreneurs and increasing the cost of participation into collective action for individuals. In this vein, the closure of regime to the Kurdish claim-making performances was an opportunity in the sense that it could provide leverage for the Kurdish movement actors' to manifest the rightness of their claims and make would-be politicized actors to participate into the Kurdish ethno-national struggle. On the other hand, forbiddance of any kind of claims related to Kurdishness needs to be graded as a factor also increasing the cost of believing and acting in this radical framing for the would-be actors.

On the other side, regarding the “high” level of opportunities created by a crisis of the dominant cleavages, beginning from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, political regime in Turkey experienced rapid regime shifts from democratic elections to the military interventions. Considerable changes in the stability of political alignments happened in parallel to the emergence of socio-political polarization across Turkey. From late 1960s to the first half of 1970s, leftist mobilization in Turkey encountered with resistance to this movement from the right-wing, produced cleavages and divided political elites. These rapid changes unsurprisingly reinvigorated Kurdish movement actors’ attributing opportunities for developing a movement organizationally detached and different on the basis of framing from dominant socialist movement in Turkey.

A challenging question about framing of the contention by the KM in Turkey can be posited in the following way: *how* and *why* the thesis of colonialism was accepted by all political groups and parties in the Kurdish movement?

In parallel to changing political opportunities and threats in Turkey, it is crucial to analyze two main external dynamics which shaped the Kurdish movement’s collective action frame and political identity formation. The first dynamic was about the success of national liberation struggles over the world throughout the 1970s that fostered a process of decolonization. While the African decolonization movements reached a significant success in the light of Marxist ideology in the 1960s-70s period, the perception of Kurdish movement actors about movement success were affected from this world-wide change. Therefore, one of the essential themes in the thesis of colonialism was framing national liberation struggles happening in other parts of the world. Journals Özgürlük Yolu and Rizgarî published news regularly about achievements of national liberation movement and/or anti-

colonialist struggles in the Middle East and Africa. This was actually an extension of internationalist line of Marxism embedded within the framing of Kurdish movement which made it pay attention to worldwide struggles which were considered to have similar characteristics. In years of 1976 and 1977, countries such as Angola, Lebanon, South Africa, Palestine, Congo, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and also national situation in different parts of the Soviet Union were framed in order to emphasize that 1970s was the era of national liberation led by Marxist movements. One of the implications of these liberation movements happening against colonial powers was their increasing beliefs of the Kurdish movement actors on movement success (Çamlıbel, Yılmaz, 2008).

The second dynamic having significant effects on political identity formation and also to framing of the contention was the *Question of Kurdistan* which I define as Kurdish contentions' affecting each other and having transcending implications over boundaries of nation-states where Kurdish contentions exist: Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. One of the factors for the KM to resort toward the Marxist ideology needs to be understood in relation to the defeat of Kurdish ethno-nationalist movements in Iraq and Iran. In the first half of the 1970s, it was obvious that the Kurdish movement in Iraq could not succeed (Yildiz, 2004: 22). The Kurdish movement actors in Turkey interpreted this defeat as a result of the Iraqi Kurdish movement's non-progressive and non-Marxist political agenda (Elhüseyni, Nurettin, 2008). The debacle of demobilization of KMs in Iraq and Iran was interpreted from the Marxist-Leninist framework with considering the cause of defeat as an outcome of right-deviation which emphasizes the absence of the class struggle and the lack of anti-imperialist agenda and criticizes acting solely from an ethno-nationalist framing of the Kurdish contention. Thus, the idea of mobilizing the Kurds in Turkey with a

Marxist-Leninist framework in anti-colonialist line could gain acceptance from all political parties and political groups and then became the *master frame*.

What other specific implications burgeoning from within the *question of Kurdistan* can be addressed on the KM in Turkey? This defeat not only affected political groups/parties of the KM in Turkey as facilitating unification of their framings but also determined ideological differences among Kurdish political parties/groups in the first half of 1970s. For example, the emergence of KAWA as a Maoist political party in 1976 was a reaction against the Soviets who betrayed the Iraqi Kurdish movement (Elhüseyni, Nurettin, 2008). Moreover, pro-Soviet tendencies remained quite weak for some of the Kurdish movement organizations due to coding the Soviets as the political power remained unsupportive for the Kurdish movement in Iraq.

After analyzing the factors which shaped political environment of the Kurdish movement in Turkey during the emergence of thesis of colonialism, the emergence of this ideological framing at organizational [meso] level should be visited.

3.6. *The Thesis of Colonialism* and Its Translation into the Movement Politics

In 1973, with the pseudonym of Hıdır Murat, Kemal Burkay wrote a book titled as "Salvation Struggle of the Kurdish People in the Conditions of Turkey" which defined Kurdistan as a colony (Bozarslan, 2007: 1179).[26] After DDKD was established in 1974, discussions about the ideological path to be followed were held

[26] Actually, this might not be the first time that thesis of colonialism mentioned within the Kurdish movement; It is possibly mentioned earlier but salience and influence of this initial formulation can be considered as debatable. According to Osman Aydın who initiated publication of Karakoçan Dergisi (*Journal of Karakoçan*), Ferit Öngören wrote and article titled as "Doğu'da Tüten Kültür" (*Culture Existing in the East*) and formulated the claim that "Kurdistan is a colony" in 1969 (Aydın, Osman, 2008). Moreover, in the notification of announcement of DDKO in 1970, one of the missions of the DDKO was defined as being part of the anti-colonial struggle, however, it was not formulated format (see Rizgarî, 1978, Issue [4]: 22-23).

in Ankara branch of the DDKD (Uzun, Paşa, 2008). However, in September 1975, the first detailed article was published about the thesis of colonialism in Özgürlük Yolu, titled as "National Question and the Colonialism Issue". The purpose of this article was to explain how colonialism is problematized in the Marxist-Leninist ideology by claiming that: [1] the national liberation struggle must be accompanied by a socialist revolution [2] a nation whose country [referring to Turkey] is being exploited by the imperialists can also oppress another nation [referring to Kurdish nation] and colonize that particular country and [3] thus colonialism should not be regarded as an outlying phenomenon [for Turkey] that can only be possible in the European context (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [4]: 10-31). Voicing about the Kurdish/Kurdistan question in relation to colonialism was already bounded with the legal restrictions in Turkey making impossible to discuss about the issue empirically. Therefore, this article remained more theoretical rather than clearly mentioning about the Kurdish question per se, without using words such as "Kurdish" and "Kurdistan". Nevertheless, it is possible to read this article as it was written on the Kurdish question, relying on the details in the article and also due to fact that Özgürlük Yolu was the political journal of the TKSP.[27] The status of being a colony in this article is defined in the following way:

> I. The relation of the colonizer and colonized in a country is based on coercion. Namely, the colonizer, usually, invades the colony with the use of arm power. The colonizer is ready to wage a war, in case of its interests are in danger or when it faces with a resistance.
>
> II. The colonizer country rules the colony with the affiliated governors, military heads and judges.
>
> III. The colonizer country exploits underground and aboveground resources and labor of the colony, destroys the domestic economy, prevents its development and makes dependent to its own economy.

[27] In the following pages, party program of TKSP as an illegal party will be analyzed which would leave no question about what this relatively abstract text mainly refered to.

> IV. [The colonizer] oppresses the local language, its art and culture while imposing its own national and colonizing culture upon the colonized. In this sense, [the colonizer] tries to enslave local people's by killing its national culture, values, language and art.
>
> V. The colonizers collaborate with traditional chiefs and feudal elements who are the most reactionary and exploiter segments of the colonized country, and also raise a generation of unprincipled intellectuals who are educated by them and also loyal to the colonizers. […]" (My translation, *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1975, Issue [4]: 24-25).

Framing the thesis of colonialism continued in Özgürlük Yolu in the forthcoming months until to December 1975 with three more articles. The locus of the contention for the Kurdish/Kurdistan question was framed as the "national conflict" and thus an anticolonial struggle fighting to resolve the national conflict was considered in need of following the principle proposed by Lenin: *the right of nations to self-determination*.[28]

> The right of nations to self-determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation. Concretely, this political, democratic demand implies complete freedom to carry on agitation in favor of secession, and freedom to settle the question of secession by means of a referendum of the nation that desires to secede. Consequently, this demand is by no means identical with the demand for secession, for partition, for the formation of small states. It is merely the logical expression of the struggle against national oppression in every form (Lenin, V.I., 1916).

The 1970s of the Kurdish movement mainly relied on this analysis of Lenin which recognizes the right of oppressed nations' developing a separate line of struggle and pursuing a collective action frame aiming to appropriate masses with reference to establishing a separate state.

[28] In addition to this, strategies and tactics to be followed for pursuing a struggle against colonialism and national oppression were also promulgated. In terms of ideological strategies to be pursued, people, who were spoken to with this political journal, called by the TKSP for to being cautious about any left or right wing deviations. The left-leaning deviation was defined as underestimating the role of the national question and prioritizing the class struggle, while the right-leaning deviation referred to stray from the socialist struggle and claiming that the class conflict divides the integrity of national struggle in which the Kurdish nationalist struggle in Iraq was used as an example (Özgürlük Yolu, 1975, Issue [7]: 24-46). Although the series of articles titled under "the national question" provided a clear definition on the fundamentals of Kurdish contention, it was quite weak in terms of explicating the ideological framework on the historical baggage of Kurdish contention, which would definitely fall into "illegal" zone in Turkey.

The empirical gap or abstract points in the articles published by the TKSP was going to be completed by Rizgarî in its first issue with an article titled as "On the Chauvinist-Racist Character of Nationalism of the Oppressor Nation". The first issue of Rizgarî was full of texts in Kurdish and published in 21 March, 1976, on the anniversary of Newroz which was inscribed as an ancient national festival of the Kurds, glorifying the struggle against the injustice of rulers against the people. Taking these symbolic nationalist sensitivities into account, Rizgarî published an important article attacking to the left-wing Kemalist approach on the Kurdish question and also writing the history of Kurdish contention in this way. According to Rizgarî, the colonization of Kurdistan -which did not merely speak on the colonial situation of Kurds in Turkey- happened after World War I:

> I. Kurdistan was divided via the Lausanne Treaty. This division was held between the French and English imperialists, national liberationists in Anatolia and indirectly the Iranian monarchy.
>
> II. These powers who shared Kurdistan have colonized the lands of Kurdistan and the Kurdish nation separately from each other. With invading the region, they expropriated natural resources completely. In order to show this colonizing act as legitimate, [colonizers] resorted to exterminate national and democratic rights of the Kurdish nation, namely, its' being a Kurdish society. And thus, the "chastity" of a nation is "distrained".
>
> III. Colonizers have always been in support and prop of each other. They have guaranteed their presence via having open or undisclosed alliances with the imperialists. Because [of the fact that] Kurdistan is their colony, jointly.
>
> IV. The Kurds have always resisted to enslavement of the Kurdish nation by being degraded as a colony […]" (My translation, Rizgarî, 1976, Issue [1]: 20).

The significance of the claims posed by Rizgarî was not limited to the historical analysis of the Kurdish/Kurdistan question. More importantly, the Kemalist ideology was subjected to a harsh criticism:

> "Kemalism is a racist ideology. A racism that is hard to see its equivalents in any other part of the world. In order to usurp national-democratic rights of the Kurds, the philosophy of Kemalism has been <There is no nation to be called Kurds, all people [in Turkey] are Turks and they are pleased with that>" All facilities of the [Turkish] state have been mobilized in order to implement this [philosophy]. What is done for whom disagreeing with that or opposing to it is persecution. It is oppression." (My translation, *Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [1]: 25).

Possibly, it was the first time that a front attack against Kemalism was proposed in such a direct way by the Kurdish movement. Unsurprisingly this criticism fell beyond the legal boundaries drawn by the Turkish legal system. The distribution of Rizgarî's fist issue -which included the article where this quote is taken- was prevented and the editor of Rizgarî (Mehmed Uzun) was arrested immediately by the Turkish state authorities (*Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [2]: 2).

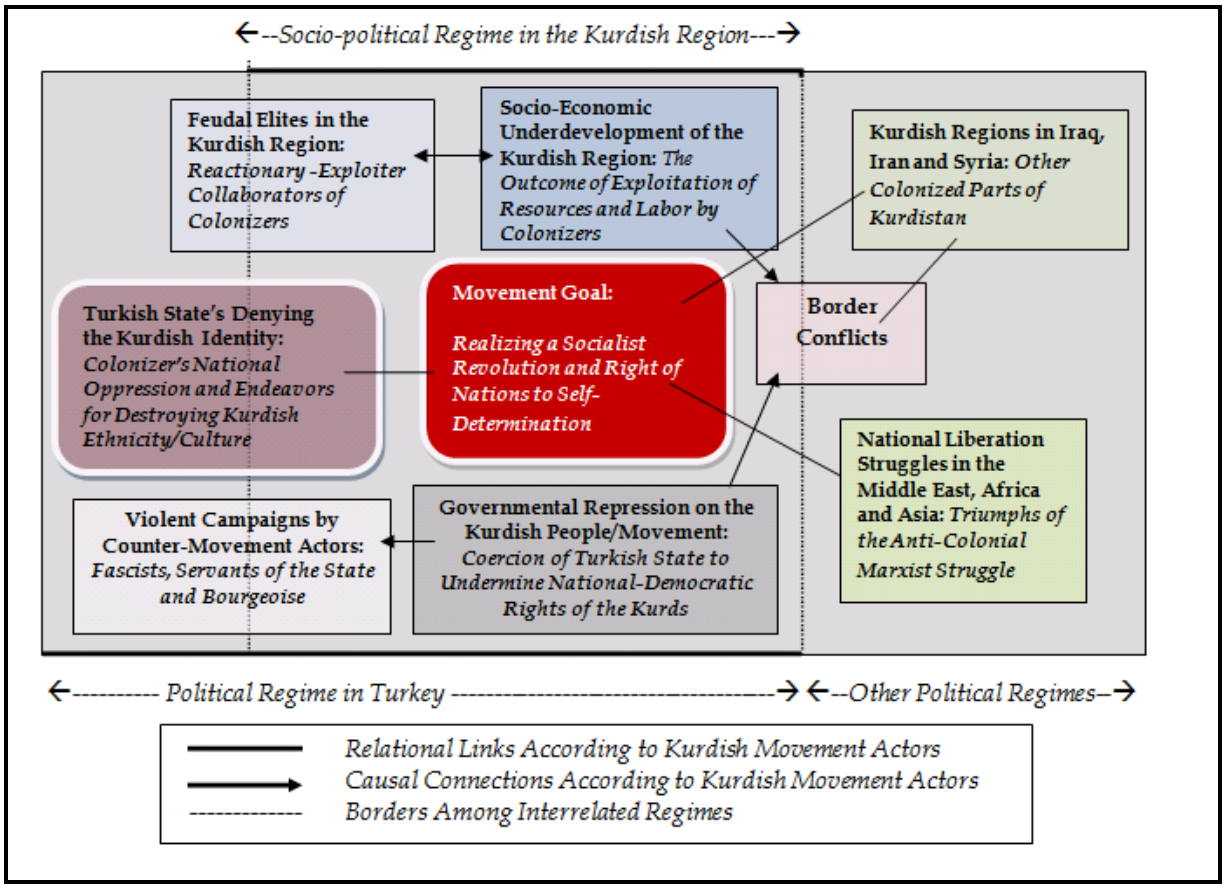
Moreover, texts analyzing the history of Kurdish question from a Marxist point of view emerged at the beginning of 1977 in the journal of TKSP and Rizgarî. The history of colonial situation in Kurdistan was considered to exist in the period in which Ottoman and Persian Empires were ruling the Kurdish populated regions. The imperial powers in the Middle East were framed as the actor of dividing Kurdistan into pieces with collaboration of nation-states subjugating the Kurds. In relation to this, uprisings of the Kurdish speaking populations against state-making activities of Turkey were examined as having national character (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1977, Issues [21-22, 23, 24, 25]; *Rizgarî*, 1977, Issue [3]). The significant dimension of this historical analysis was its building the history of all Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria as evolving from a shared historical background.

The attention of Kurdish movement organizations on Kurdish/Kurdistan questions in other Middle Eastern countries was not fixated merely contextualizing them in the national history of the Kurds. Beginning from 1975, all political journals

of the Kurdish movement publicized news and articles about every noteworthy political change concerning Kurdish movements in Iraq and Iran. Rather than satisfying a mere curiosity about the flow of other Kurdish movements in Iraq and Iran, this attention was an outcome of framing of the Kurdish/Kurdistan question from within the colonialism thesis which claims that Kurdish regions in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria are the parts of a whole [Kurdistan]. The freedom of the Kurds living in other nation-states was thus considered as depending on each other.

The following question will be helpful to delve into "How thesis of colonialism can be understood in line with framing of the contentious interactions and actors in the 1970s of Kurdish movement?" Figure 5 is an attempt of showing how the Kurdish movement actors *interpreted* repeated events and positions of actors they have contentious interactions with the master frame of colonialism thesis.

Figure 5. The Thesis of Colonialism: Ideological Framework of the Kurdish Movement in the 1970s



Those actors or situations which were considered to be interrelated with each other are visualized as intersecting. For example, according to Kurdish movement actors, violence of counter-movements was not independent from the Turkish state that due to state's providing certain degree of protection for the fascists. In another vein, border conflict was not only considered to be emerging due to socio-economic underdevelopment of the region, however, it was part of a more complicated problem in case of reading this question from the prism of thesis of colonialism. One of the examples of how the Kurdish movement analyzed the border conflict in DDKD's political journal is able to show this complexity.

> Although practices around the border are implemented under the name of preventing smuggling, this is one of the methods realized for destroying our people/nation. Main purpose of laying mines is to cut connections among the people/nation living in the region. As it is known, people living around the border are different parts of the same nation. Since the day that the imperialists and colonizers divided our nation with artificial borders, they have strived for preventing relations between our people and that is the main reason behind laying of mines (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issue [9]: 3).

Overall, the thesis of colonialism was not only a set of theoretical arguments driven from Marxist understanding of revolution or Leninism, it was also an ideological perspective letting Kurdish movement actors to interpret actors and deeds concerning social and political issues.

3.7. The Strategies and Goals of Kurdish Movement Organizations

The acceptance of colonialism thesis by all Kurdish political groups/parties should not make us assume that strategies of the all movement organizations were utterly the same. Perceptions of the master frame and its translation into political language by Kurdish movement organizations differed in relation to their employing different strategies about the ways of reaching the movement goal: decolonizing

Kurdistan via a socialist revolution. Except the TKSP, all other Kurdish movement organizations did not deviate from this main goal. To see the extent of deviation, it will be beneficial to look at the *regulation statement* of the TKSP which defines the main aim of the party as follows:

> "Kurdistan is divided and colonized among the states in this region according to interests and endeavors of the imperialists. Kurdish people are reduced to servitude. Economic structure in Kurdistan has a semi-feudal structure. In a way compatible with this truth, the primary goal of our party is to establish a democratic society with liquidating national oppression on the people of Turkish Kurdistan and feudal relations in the country" (TKSP Dava Dosyası, 1984:21).

TKSP did not offer to establish an independent Kurdish nation-state and the goal was foundation of a federation or autonomy for the Kurds in Turkey (Burkay, Kemal 2008; Çamlıbel, Yılmaz, 2008). In this regard, TKSP was the only Kurdish political party among the all parties not framing its goal as establishment of a Kurdish nation-state.

Rizgarî clearly stated that they interpret the principle of *rights of nations for self-determination* as "a political separation from foreign nations and establishing an independent nation-state" (Rizgarî Dava Dosyası, 1981: 28). While Kawa [the Moist Kurdish SMO] employed the same goals as Rizgarî, they differentiated themselves with considering peasantry as the main revolutionary segment of the proletariat (Kawa Dava Dosyası, 1985: 49). KİP, established in 1977, announced in its' program to be dedicated to get *rights of nations for self-determination* in the context of free Kurdistan and fighting against feudalism and comprador bourgeoisie allying with Turkish colonizers (KİP/DDKD Dava Dosyası, 2006: 77). The PKK, which was established in late 1978 followed the same political agenda in terms of establishing a socialist Kurdish nation-state while deciding to wage a fight against "submissive

understandings trying to negotiate with Turkish colonialism under titles such as 'regional self-governance' or 'autonomy' not aiming to dismantle from the enslavement of the colonizer Turkish Republic" (PKK-Program, 1981: 35). More interestingly, TKDP which was a right-wing Kurdish political party changed its program in November 1977 (also its name to KUK- Kurdistan National Liberators) and accepted Marxist ideology while claiming to struggle for a "fully independent Kurdistan" in its party program (KUK Dava Dosyası, 1981: 88). Overall, it is possible to state that the thesis of colonialism was the master frame for the 1970s of Kurdish movement (Bozarslan, 2007: 1180) while the goal of the movement was to realize decolonization with a revolution leading to socialism.

Demands of the Kurdish movement organizations can be considered as quite radical considering their objectives concretized within the thesis of colonialism. After contextualizing the Kurdish/Kurdistan question from within the Marxist-Leninist ideology, how did the Kurdish movement frame necessary strategies to reach their particular goals? In other words, how would it be possible to implement a political program which would ensure establishment of a Kurdish state via a socialist revolution?

It is not possible to put forth a clear cut statement about methods of anti-colonial struggle proposed by the Kurdish social movement organizations. This is because of the fact that strategies employed by the Kurdish movement varied over time and subjected to reactions to regime changes through the second half of the 1970s. Nevertheless, this does not make it nonsense to argue about perspectives of Kurdish SMOs about the methods of struggle to be pursued, including political violence as means of struggle. Regarding the extent of the movement goals, it would be contradictory for a movement organization to refuse employing armed struggle on

a discursive level. Therefore, except the PKK, use of political violence was strategically framed by the Kurdish movement organizations as a method of struggle to be employed after the process of mobilization would be succeeded. *The strategic use of political violence* is explained by one of the former members of DDKD, Vildan Tanrıkulu, as follows:

> We believed in opportunities of struggling in the legal field. Legal struggle would make masses participate in the struggle while illegal methods would limit it. Illegality would be prone to cabals and conspiracies in addition to narrowing down the scope of struggle. I am not stating that pursuing a struggle on the illegal field would always create results in this way. We [KİP/DDKD] had a perspective of the armed struggle. In the classical way, it was called as the strategy of *people's war*. We had preparations for that. That is how emergence of the DDKD took place… We did not consider political violence as a means of appropriating people and especially the youth. Regarding the classical understanding of people's war strategy, after realizing a really powerful political mobilization relying on alliance of workers and peasants and also youth mobilization, an uprising would be possible with civil disobedience actions followed by the armed support campaigns from rural to urban areas. According to us, that was something to take a long time (Tanrıkulu, 2008).

To generalize the perspective of KİP/DDKD on the strategy and the armed struggle was shared by all other Kurdish movement organizations –except PKK and TKSP- would not be misleading. However, within the master frame of the 1970s of Kurdish movement, certain goals had already been put forward and agreed on by all sectors of the movement except TKSP aiming to establish a federation not a state. The impact of framing on movement strategies to be implemented is analyzed by İbrahim Güçlü, one of the leaders of Rizgarî in the following way:

> We believed that liberation of Kurdistan could only be possible in case of being against the [Turkish] state's violence monopoly. However, applying armed struggle would be determined only by the conditions. We were convinced that the state would not let us to have Kurdistan without warfare. This was due to believing in that national liberation could not be possible without an armed struggle, because of the fact that we had mentioned that Kurdistan is a colony and even in a situation backward than a colony. We

> had clearly stated that the [Turkish] state is a colonizer state. It is possible to say that the armed struggle was the absolute path to be pursued by all [Kurdish] movement organizations, maybe, except Özgürlük Yolu [TKSP] (Güçlü, 2008).

None of the Kurdish movement organizations started to use armed struggle in their contentious repertoire at the beginning except PKK, although all accepted the thesis of colonialism. All of them considered creating a mass mobilization necessary at first. After then, they shaped their political agenda according to changing conditions and movement success. Excluding TKSP, all other movement organizations such as the KİP, Rizgarî, Kawa, and KUK had a perspective on strategic use of armed struggle in parallel to plans about pursuing a strategy of people's war. In other words, antisystem ideological frame suggesting radical demands had already drawn certain limits about strategies to be used. In other words, without neglecting the need for armed struggle to establish the socialist Kurdistan, the ideological frame itself created a propensity and patterns of justification for waging political violence, only if certain conditions could be created. Nevertheless, the spread of political violence is not only a matter of decisions made on the meso [organizational] level. If macro level factors lead to conditions which leave little space for nonviolent collective action, armed struggle would be likely to emerge and spread in order to reproduce or protect mobilization. In this sense, for movement organizations to decide on waging armed struggle is determinative but its ability to diffuse is bounded with the environmental factors. The movement actors in PKK were different from others due to having strategy of armed propaganda in their mind but the spread of political violence actually happened after a harsh decrease in the level of democracy happened in Turkey, in 1979.

3.8. Contentious Interactions from 1976 to mid-1977: Attempts of Mobilization against Repression

The first National Front (MC) cabinet that was formed in March 1975 with the participation of all right-wing political parties in the parliament and this led to start of a new repressive regime against the leftist mobilization. In 1976, heightening level of contention diffused not only in different sectors of the society but also within the various institutions of state bureaucracy which became instruments of right-wing authorities for yielding power (Ahmad, 2005: 197). In order to understand the nature of this competition for power, it is necessary to analyze how the labor regime in Turkey was prone to patronage relations which had potential to influence dynamics of mobilization considerably.

> Except for a brief period in the 1970s, the networking potential of the right far exceeded that of the left due to immediate rewarding of allegiance of the cadres. Right-wing coalition governments effectively parcellised the administrative apparatus and political fraternities were accommodated wholesale, as in the case of Ministry of Education, colonized by the fascist party, or the Ministry of Industry overtaken by Islamic groups (Keyder, 1987: 215).

1976 was one of the peak years for the National Front coalition in terms of exploiting state resources for its hegemonic purposes. Nevertheless, the advantage of occupying governmental apparatus was not only about holding certain niche state institutions. In addition t dominating most of the state institutions, both violent and non-violent repression strategies could be posed against the leftist mobilization in order to increase the cost of collective action for the left-wing movement actors. Thus, it would be possible for counter-movements (moderate right-wing, fascists and

Islamists) to engage in actions –violent or non-violent- while having certain degree of protection from the security forces or civil bureaucracy.

In the first three months of 1976, attacks of the right-wing actors in the Kurdish region started especially within educational institutions and created contentious interactions among students of different wings or between the leftist students and right-wing teachers. Kurdish political magazines framed four events showing violent attacks led by right-wing movement actors and one non-violent protest took place while the cities of contention were Diyarbakır, Bitlis and Bingöl (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [8-11]; *Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [1]). However, in the 2nd quarter of 1976, while attacks on the leftists continued, the form of violent attacks changed to more organized forms in more lethal ways, like bombing the leftist associations in which Kurdish movement was organized locally, especially in Ağrı (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [13-14]). The pragmatic use of both violent and non-violent contentious repertoires was an outcome of counter-movements' perceiving leftist and/or Kurdish mobilization as a threat against the regime structure in the status quo. Therefore, as a result of the strategy of decreasing the frequency of "leftist threat", the fascist party in Turkey concentrated its activities and resources on certain cities of Turkey as well as in the Kurdish region in order to create a counter-mobilization. In this vein, Alparslan Türkeş, the leader of the MHP, organized demonstrations in Erzurum, Iğdır, Kars, Doğubeyazıt and Ağrı which were the provinces having considerable number of Turkish and Azerbaijani people as well as Kurds. One of the main instruments of creating a counter-mobilization was to rely on activation of ethnic and religious boundaries with bolding *us and them* distinctions such as Alevi-Sunni or Azerbaijani-Kurdish.

In the first half of 1976, repressive actions of the state mainly followed two veins in the Kurdish region. The first set of repressive state actions were related to the border conflict and disarmament matters while the second type of repressive practices targeted the organizational structure of the Kurdish movement and/or leftist movement in the region. Regarding the first quarter of 1976, 2 people were killed in Midyat (Mardin) related to smuggling and 5 others were also killed in Mardin by the Turkish military forces, in a place 70 kilometers far away from the border (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issue [9]: 94-95; Issue [10]: 72). These murders were framed by the Kurdish movement as the repressions of Turkish State targeting "the Kurdish people" not merely smugglers per se. In relation to this, Turkish state started endeavoring searches for disarmament in certain villages and towns and exposed people in the rural parts of the Kurdish region to certain rights violations which were framed by the Kurdish movement as sheer repressive practices (*Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [2]: 108). On the other side, the National Front government had no hesitations about repressing movement organizations on the left in many ways which by definition decreased the level of democracy in the regime. In the first half of 1976, two local associations were closed due to committing "propaganda of Kurdism and communism", Rizgarî's first issue was collected and it was prevented from publishing new issues, number of arrests regarding Kurdish and/or leftist movement actors increased and three events of state violence occurred including TÖB-DER members' being tortured by the military officials (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [8-15]; *Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [1-2]). The second half of 1976 was almost the copy of the first half in terms of continuation of repressive actions of state during searches for guns and tortures in the course of state-society interactions, stopping activities of local associations with a justification of their committing to propaganda of Kurdism and communism in addition to

continuation of people's being murdered related to the border conflict (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [15-20]).

In this period, dynamics of mobilization within the Kurdish movement were shaped on a ground referring to protesting repressive practices. Thousands of people protested this wave of repression, up-to-date socio-economic problems and also celebrated Newroz festival in Mardin (*Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [2]: 103). Additionally, protests voiced against repression of the counter-movement actors in educational institutions, in Diyarbakır and Bingöl and also against deportation of students to other education institutions because of their involvement in contentions (*Rizgarî*, 1976, Issue [2]: 104-106). However, the most important change that happened in 1976 was transformation in the form of contentious interactions to more organized forms of violent repertoires between the right-wing movement actors and the Kurdish movement actors and/or the leftist movement.

The increasing level of violent contentions needs to be understood as an outcome of the right-wing actors' purpose of creating a counter-mobilization on their side or halting mobilization based on the left-wing ideology in the Kurdish region. This turn to violence can not be generalized to all cities in the region in 1976 and it remained limited to Ağrı, Bingöl, Van and Elazığ in 1976, which then became sites of repeated counteractive violence in the following two years. The route of change for the fascist movement in Turkey was from *unspecialized violence* to *semi-military violence* which corresponds to low-level but more organized form of violence (see della Porta, 1995: 4). Actually, keeping in mind that some of ultranationalists were trained in commando camps and thus turned to be *specialists in violence*, it should not be surprising that contentious repertoire of the counter-movement actors was dominated by the violent actions. One of the indicators of this change should be

considered as usage of guns by the right-wing actors during recourse to violent activities which started causing serious wounds of left-wing movement actors (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [17]: 86-87, 91). In order to analyze the implications of this change, it would be beneficial to pose following question: how did this change affect the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement in the second half of 1976? It would be too naïve thinking that the Kurdish and/or leftist movement actors did not respond to right-wing violent actions in a similar way or did not engage in use of political violence as a means of struggle (see *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [15-16]: 87-88). However, political violence posed against-counter movements was still in a spontaneous form rather than having an organized character. The main strategy was still mobilizing people in the region with nonviolent protests against the perceived degree of repression from the Turkish state and the counter-movements.

Protests in Silvan (Diyarbakır), Bitlis and Yüksekova (Hakkari) were organized in order to create awareness about unjust practices of the Turkish state and against "the fascists" perceived to be protected by the state (see *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [17-21]). Actually, it is possible to suggest that violent actions of the ultranationalist commandos [fascists] which restarted in the 1970s were subject to certain degree of support from security forces [including the Turkish military] and also independence form interrogations in most cases (Aydınoğlu, 2007: 402). Therefore, it was not an artificial claim-making performance for the Kurdish movement to form an *injustice framing* in 1976 via organizing demonstrations on repressions. In addition to the protests mentioned above, main implication of violent counter-movement attacks was the emergence of "funeral protests" which happened after the left-wing movement actors were killed. Three Kurdish movement actors were killed in this period and protests were organized for their funerals in Van, Suruç

(Urfa) and Bingöl (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1976, Issues [13-14]: 86, [17]: 87-88, [19]: 83). However, these protests were policed by the Turkish security forces in a violent suppression which then followed by arresting tens of movement actors. Overall, it is possible to say that dynamics of mobilization in the Kurdish region were mainly shaped around the repression theme which led the Kurdish movement to frame injustice as an important component of the thesis of colonialism.

Unsurprisingly, political violence originating within the right-wing and targeting the leftists was not a peculiar phenomenon limited merely to the Kurdish region and the level of contention in Turkey seriously was increasing in 1976 more or less in a similar way. At the end of 1976, the number of people killed related to political causes was 104 while 1852 people were wounded (Ahmad, 2005: 1999). Nevertheless, the leftist movement in Turkey was not that much docile against organized political violence of counter-movements. The leftist movement in Turkey could develop a country-wide strike for protesting these repressions, initiated by the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (DISK) in the last quarter of 1976.

Finally, in 1976, the Kurdish movement was still not formed centrally organized mobilizing structures in the region yet that would be wheels of increasing level and effectiveness of collective actions. In this period, mobilizing structures started to be built in local scales in the Kurdish region without a centrally organized way. Therefore, the capacity of the Kurdish movement was not enough to develop a powerful opposition or to lead a considerable political change in 1976. In other words, as it is expected, publishing political journals and voicing collective actions frame was not sufficient to create a mobilization. Although ideological position of the Kurdish movement was visible on an abstract level, its language was still begging for being translated for interpreting social, economic and political problems in the

region and launching collective actions to create a significant political influence. On the other side, although counter-movements were in the process of establishing a ground for their aims in the region, their violent activities could put the left-wing and/or the Kurdish movement into an erratic situation and thus limited their ability to develop sustainable collective actions. This threat against left-wing social movements in general was perceived as an opportunity by the Kurdish movement actors and used as a leverage for the protests.

Although a considerable mobilization had not happened in the Kurdish region at the beginning of 1977, the level of contention in the other parts of Turkey – especially the metropolis areas- had significantly increased. Before the general elections held in June 1977, Turkey witnessed "The Bloody Mayday" in Istanbul with the participation of more than a hundred thousands of people. As a result of the Turkish state forces' firing and crashing on demonstrators, 34 people were killed and hundreds of them wounded (STMA, 1988: 2281). Almost all of the Kurdish movement organizations also participated in Mayday in Istanbul, in 1977. Thereafter, a media campaign was started by national newspapers such as Hürriyet, Tercüman and Dünya to accuse members of Rizgarî with a charge of shooting on the crowd and thus starting the events causing people to die (*Rizgarî*, 1978, Issue [4]: 116-116). This media campaign –which was a search for a scapegoat for this mass murder other than the state- should be regarded as how the Kurdish movement was easily labeled as a source of threat against 'the order' in Turkey and it was also demonized in the language of mainstream media.

After the general elections, the state capacity in Turkey started to decrease mainly because of the governmental stability indicating a political crisis. In the first half of 1977, contentious interactions that happened in the Kurdish region did not

undergo a significant qualitative change except crystallization of conflicts in some cities and its diffusion to some other cities. While the violent contentions became settled in Bingöl, Ağrı and Elazığ, the salience of contention in Diyarbakır increased too. Political violence posed by the counter-movements did not diminish in that period and new casualties from the left-wing came out as a result of these interactions. In Diyarbakır, not the ultranationalist but a pro-Islamic student movement known as National Turkish Students Union (MTTB) engaged in violent contentions with the Kurdish and/or leftist movement in the Education Institute of Diyarbakır (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1977, Issue [24]: 75-78). After a series of violent encounters happened, these contentions were followed by nonviolent demonstrations held by the left-wing students.

On the other hand, the Kurdish magazines started to publicize more and more on the state-society interactions in the region. Various news and articles were publicized about arbitrary repressive practices of the Turkish state -especially held by the Turkish military- to show that the Kurdish people were exposed to unjust actions (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1977, Issues [20-25]). More importantly, the role of the state in any kind of societal contention started to be framed as an intervention triggering the social conflicts and thus increasing detrimental consequences of these conflicts. In relation to this, it was not only the Kurdish movement framing the conflicts between the Kurdish people and the Turkish state, but also some parliament members elected from the region proposed motions too for questioning the government about the repressive actions of the Turkish military (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1977, Issue [22]: 93-94). In that way, the Kurdish movement aimed to question the legitimacy of the Turkish state in the Kurdish region. Conflicts between the Kurdish feudal landlords and the oppressed Kurdish people at sense to show the class conflict in the region. In next

years, this specific theme was going to have an important place in the Kurdish movement's framing of the contention especially for voicing that feudal elites were favoring from the state power as an indication of their collaboration with the Turkish state.

The contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement expanded in this period via entering into the field of labor politics. Although it is possible to say that there has never been a substantial industrial base that would offer great opportunities for movements to mobilize the working class in the region, the limited potential started to be activated on local scales among farm workers in the first half of 1977. Ceylanpınar Development Farm was one of the state-owned enterprises employing thousands of workers. When the majority of these workers signed their membership in a leftist agricultural trade union, most of them were fired from their jobs and a resistance started in this workplace (*Özgürlük Yolu*, 1977, Issue [24]: 81). Beginning from now on, this social site was going to be one of the crucial places in which the competition among Kurdish movement organizations was going to take place.

3.9. Conclusion

After the political regime in Turkey experienced a re-democratization process in the period of 1973-74, a general amnesty was declared as a result of RPP's initiatives. This constituted a political opportunity structure for the left-wing movement in Turkey, in the course of having an *influential ally* in power [RPP]. After political prisoners who were incarcerated by the militarist regime were released, important cadres of the socialist-revolutionary movement in Turkey started a phase of reorganization. The same opportunity was also taken up by the Kurdish movement actors. Main importance of imprisonment process was Kurdish movement actors' separation from the socialist parties. Building an organizational structure on

its own feet yielded results but could not prevent fractionalization of political groups or would-be political parties.

While different political groups were in a process of party-formation in 1974-1976, Kurdish movement actors started to engender collective claims-making performances against the repression of the state and counter-movement actors in years of 1974-1976. On the other hand, organized political violence was started by ultra-nationalist violence specialists and targeted the left-wing in Turkey as a whole especially after the National Front government came into power. In that period, the heightening level of contention in the Kurdish region started. A protest meeting against the leader of MHP, Alparslan Türkeş, was organized in Diyarbakır by the alliance of Kurdish movement actors and various left-wing institutions. Although the state repressed this protest in a violent way, it was a success to prevent Türkeş from giving a speech in Diyarbakır. 1976 and 1977 witnessed increase in the level of collective actions in the Kurdish region mainly via framing state repression, state deficiency and organized violence of counter-movements which all together constituted parts of an injustice theme in the framing of the Kurdish movement. However, framing of the Kurdish movement was much more complex than that. *The thesis of colonialism* emerged with radical demands and became a *master frame* for the all political parties and groups in the Kurdish movement. Employment of armed struggle for reaching movement goals was strategically framed and creation of a mass mobilization in the Kurdish region favoring from the legal zone was the primary goal in medium-term.

For more dense forms of collective action, the Kurdish movement had to wait for emergence of political parties and associations as their legal extensions. In other words, putting framing into actions was the first task for the Kurdish movement in

1977. The next chapter will concentrate on the dynamics of mobilization and radicalization after analyzing the effects of the emergence of Kurdish movement organizations.

CHAPTER IV

MOBILIZATION PROCESS AND THE EMERGENCE OF ORGANIZED POLITICAL VIOLENCE: 1977-1980

4.1. Introduction

Until 1977, the making of colonialism thesis was almost complete and newly formed political groups/parties did not come up with other ideological approaches. The missing element in the process of mobilization was the emergence of repeated interactions between meso- and micro- levels which refers to the activation of *social appropriation* mechanism by the Kurdish movement organizations to make the Kurdish people participate in collective actions. Therefore, the spread of mobilizing structures after 1976, such as political parties in the illegal zone and associations in the legal field, played a crucial role for developing dynamic contentious action campaigns. In this regard, based on the level of movement activity, it is true that the Kurdish movement experienced a considerable level of mobilization that began in 1977 and increased in 1978.

Regarding the mobilization with non-violent contentious repertoires from mid-1977 to mid-1979, the purpose of this chapter is to delve into the following questions: How did the Kurdish movement experience the process of mobilization? How did the thesis of colonialism influence the dynamics of mobilization in that specific period? *How* and *why* did the Kurdish movement start resorting to organized political violence in 1979? In the light of these questions, this chapter will analyze the reasons of radicalization of the Kurdish movement via specifically concentrating on changes in the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement in relation to regime changes in Turkey.

4.2. The Emergence of Movement Organizations in the Kurdish Movement of the 1970s

Before analyzing how the Kurdish movement organizations developed after 1976, it would be beneficial to emphasize an organizational difference between a 'movement organization' and a 'political party'. Inspired from the Bolshevik Revolution and Leninism, understanding of a *political party* was shaped around the idea of having a political unit coordinating the socialist struggle for the revolution. While operating according to the principle of 'democratic centralism', a set of ideologically defined rules-guidelines (*Tüzük*) determines the ways in which organizational matters are held and a 'party program' identifies the political objectives of the organization in addition to methods to be employed to reach these objectives (Lenin, 1993: 118-142). In Turkey, according to law, any revolutionary political party was considered to be an illegal political body due to its being a threat to 'the order'. On the other hand, *social movement organizations* should be understood as the totality of 'political parties' and their 'legal extensions' which emerges to exploit the legal arena for mobilizing the masses, such as legally recognized associations.[29] Overall, for an activist or revolutionary, being in a movement organization does not -by definition- meant to be a member of that particular political party while membership to a political party means to have a role in leading to the strategies and tactics of that movement organization.

Although some of the political parties in the Kurdish movement were established before 1978, most of them were in a phase of group formation or existing in different names. Political parties in the Kurdish movement that had a socialist-

[29] The distinction of political party and movement organization can not be applied to all components of the Kurdish movement; nevertheless, most of the wheels of mobilization followed this type of organizational arrangement as a requirement of their ideological positioning. Sectors in the Kurdish movement were either a political party or a would-be political party after mid-1975.

revolutionary agenda were forming their core cadres during the 1974-1977 period. Political groups formed their central bodies in these years: the TKSP (late 1974-1975), KAWA (1975-76), the KİP (1977), Rizgarî (1975-76), the KUK (1978) and the PKK as a late-comer (l975-78).

Participation of the Kurdish people in the collective actions considerably increased with the spread of associations in the 1977-1978 period. The spread of associations across the Kurdish region became main wheels of *social/organizational appropriation* which is the mechanism of transforming would-be political actors to political subjects. Although all of the Kurdish parties did not have centrally established associations under one name, all parties invested in associations or trade unions and tried to exploit this opportunity. The TKSP founded *Revolutionary People's Cultural Associations* (DHKD), the KİP formed *Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations* (DDKD), and Rizgarî established *Anti-Colonialist Democratic Cultural Associations* (ASK-DER) while the remaining political parties established local associations and/or appropriated already established associations under different names. Thinking that collective actions in the region significantly increased in 1978, diffusion of associations across the Kurdish region had a positive impact on the capacity of the movement organizations to launch collective action.

Decreasing capacity of the Turkish state due to governmental crisis in mid-1977 coincided with the struggles Kurdish movement actors to diffuse their legal mobilizing structures across the Kurdish region in the 1977-78 period. Despite the second National Front cabinet was established in June 1977 after the general elections, it could not survive due to the results of local elections held in December 1977, in which the success of the RPP was obvious. Regarding the municipal elections, the success of the Kurdish movement is noteworthy to analyze due to the

significance of these movements to generate political changes in the Kurdish region. Some of the illegal Kurdish political parties nominated their independent candidates or engaged in alliances with legal socialist parties in order to have a control of municipalities. Although it seems like an oxymoron for illegal revolutionary parties to work for achievements in municipal elections, the logic behind this tactic was to take advantage of all opportunities in the legal field for accessing power and resources to increase mobilization of the masses. On the other hand, the decision of competing in the local elections cannot be generalized for all Kurdish movement organizations and was not a general strategy of the movement organizations; the local dynamics in terms of pressures from below were also influential (Elhüseyni, Nurettin, 2007).

The most significant electoral achievement was performed by the TKSP which won the mayorship of Diyarbakır with Mehdi Zana. In Lice (Diyarbakır), they won elections with Nazmi Balkaş while they lost Doğubeyazıt with an incremental difference in vote rates (*Özgürlük Yolu*, Issues [31-31]: 11-14).[30] In 1979, TKSP won elections in Ağrı with Urfan Aparslan, PKK won elections in Batman with Edip Solmaz (Elhüseyni, Nurettin, 2007). During the pre-election period, collective actions and interactions for getting votes reached a considerable level. Kovan Amedi, as one of the active members of DHKD/TKSP narrates this period in the following way:

> It [*Mehdi Zana's demonstration*] was really a crowded and massive demonstration which happened during the pre-election period. We started for propaganda 7-8 months earlier than the election date. It is a long time. In this period, young people who were the members of DHKD worked very hard. The mayor was Mehdi Zana but who brought him to presidency were the members of DHKD. We were divided according to locations of

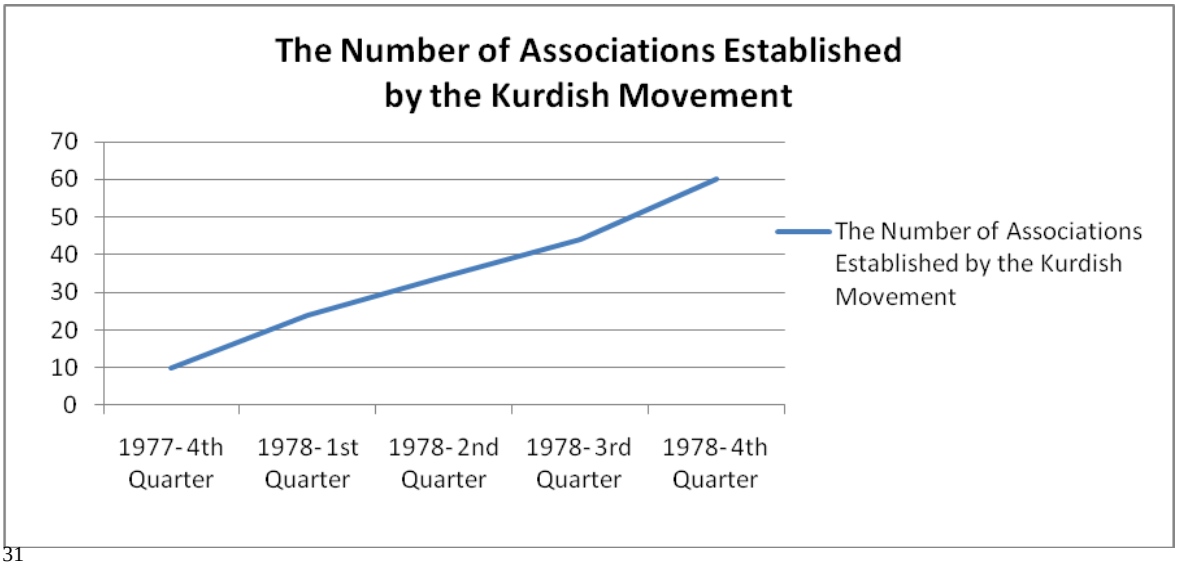
[30] When Mehdi Zana was elected as the mayor of Diyarbakır, he was one of the central committee members of the TKSP (Burkay, 2008; see also *Rizgarî*, 1978, Issue [5]: 89)

> coffeehouses as groups of 3 or 4. We had formed committees in Ofis, Bağlar, Mardin Kapı, Melik Ahmet… We were talking to people and distributing handouts, if we had. It was kind of our job: explaining politics to the people (Amedi, 2008).

Regarding the electoral process in Diyarbakır, it is possible to say that movement activism from grassroots became an important dynamic which influenced the results of municipal elections. On the other hand, it is not possible to claim that it was solely the activities of Kurdish movement organizations which brought the electoral successes; local dynamics also had significant role in that process. Not only in a few provinces or towns, the effects of mobilization in the Kurdish region created a pattern of voting behavior which did not happen before: "In the December 1977 local elections, a significant portion of the electorate in Kurdish-majority provinces in the southeast supported independent candidates for local office rather than candidates from the national political parties. In the provinces of Muş, Siirt, Ağrı, Mardin, Van, Bitlis, Tunceli, Elazığ, Bingöl, and Diyarbakır, the vote for independent mayoral candidates ranged from 12 to 71 percent" (Dorronsoro and Watts, 2009: 460). Taking into account that there are other structural and local factors influencing voting behaviors of people, this success neither totally belonged to the Kurdish movement organizations nor did electoral success emerge independently from it. Consequently, elections for the municipality showed that the Kurdish movement reached certain level that would affect the flow of politics happening on the local ground, especially in certain provinces. Years of 1977-79 witnessed the effects of mechanism of *downward scale shift* during the mobilization process in a way including elections. This scale shift means diffusion of movement associations and contentious interactions across cities and towns of the Kurdish region. However, more importantly, after 1977, contention started to diffuse rural areas either and did not remain limited to provinces. This process started in 1977 and continued with a linear

progress in 1978 and reached more than 60 associations. Figure 6 shows the sharp increase in the number of Kurdish associations.

Figure 5. The Spread of the Movement Associations during the Process of Mobilization in the 1970s



[31]

These movement associations did not remain loyal to the legal boundaries at all and encountered with repeated closures by the state authorities. The efforts of most of the Kurdish movement organizations concentrated on the legal field in the 1977-78 period. With the advent of 1979, military repression was introduced via declaration of martial law that prevented activities held in these associations. Actually, for the illegal Kurdish political parties, investing on the legal field was an outcome of the strategy pursued for exploiting legal field as much as possible in order to gain mass support (Tanrıkulu, Vildan, 2009). However, this strategy also rendered the organizational assets of the movement vulnerable and visible to the intervention of Turkish state forces after 1978. In other words, while semi-illegal structure of the Kurdish movement organizations contributed to the level of mobilization, it also had disadvantages for the movement cadres when the level of democracy in regime

[31] Figure 3 is prepared according to the list of movement associations compiled over scan of all related political journals and court proceedings. It is higly likely that the real number of movement associations was higher than the final number shown in the graph.

decreased and the state started arresting key movement actors systematically during the martial law period that ended with the military coup.

4.3. Putting Framing into Action: Social/Organizational Appropriation and The New Kurdish Contentious Repertoire in 1978

The question of "who were the Kurdish movement actors?" begs for an answer in order to weigh the role of actor constitution on the dynamic of mobilization after 1976. All core cadres of Kurdish political parties had been affiliated with higher education circles in universities or institutes. Thus, they were occupying relationally high-status jobs or they had chance to be employed within the state-provided jobs. However, this argument can not be generalized for the all forthcoming recruits of Kurdish movement organizations.[32] Either holding a respected position in the society or being a university student should be considered as an advantage for the movement actors in the eyes of would-be politicized segments of the Kurdish society.

A set of interactions happening between movement organizations and would-be politicized individuals refer to mechanism of *social appropriation* which is basically defined as transforming nonpolitical groups to political actors (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007: 34). Different forms of social appropriation tactics of the Kurdish movement actors can be basically classified as *conventional/institutional* methods on the one hand and *non-institutional/network-based* methods on the other. Within an institution-based framework: trade unions, education-related institutional sites,

[32] This claim is based on the analysis of demographic information about Kurdish movement actors provided in case records for each political party. Education level of movement actors who were arrested by the military coup in 1980 does not present a particular pattern, except leading cadres of these political parties.

centrally established occupation-based associations and locally operating cultural-political associations were the essential contentious sites in which attempts of appropriation to the struggle happened. Analyzing the content of Kurdish political magazines shows that most branches of centrally established occupational associations like TÖB-DER and trade unions like TÜM-DER in addition to various branches of trade unions, which were generally members of the DİSK, were appropriated by the Kurdish movement organizations. Moreover, high-schools and higher education institutes were transformed to be spaces for seminars on the ideological framework of the Kurdish movement. These seminars were called as *forums* and discussions about colonial situation of Kurdistan regularly took place at educational institutions of the Turkish state in most of provinces and towns in the region (Yıldırım, M. Ali, 2008; Tekgül, Çeko, 2008). In addition to employing institutional forms of appropriation mechanisms, novelty of the Kurdish movement pertains to politicization of non-institutional networks and embeddedness of political struggle within set of social relationships and rituals.

Social appropriation happened in four *non-institutional* ways which either directly led to movement activity or created socio-political power for the movement cadres. The first method for being a noteworthy actors in the society emerged from within the characteristics of *socio-political regime* in the Kurdish region. As the existence of Kurds as a distinct cultural/political group has been denied in Turkey, unsurprisingly, it was always traumatic for the Kurdish people to encounter with the Turkish state bureaucracy, especially because of not being able to use Turkish language. The emergence of Kurdish movement organizations, which was mainly composed of educated young Kurdish people, intervened into this troublesome relation and started to be intermediaries between the state bureaucracy and Kurdish

society. Writing petitions for free, helping for the necessary legal documents related to bureaucratic tasks, assisting for matters related to courts, resolving Kurdish people's tensions with bureaucracy were some of these activities (Yıldırım, 2008; Uzun, 2008).

The second method of creating socio-political power for movement cadres was related to role of movement actors regarding their initiation to solve societal conflicts and making conflicting parties to reconcile. Matters like abduction of women, unjust practices of societal elites, disputes between families and tribes were settled down as a result of recognition of movement activists as noteworthy actors by the masses (Amedi, 2008; Baksi, 2008; Tanrıkulu, 2008). Unsurprisingly, the solutions for these problems relied on principles of consolidating 'justice' and 'protection of the oppressed' which increased the credibility of movement actors in society.

The third non-institutional way of transforming people into political actors, cases in which individuals were not appropriated/politicisized over institutional links, corresponds to labor politics. In some regions, Kurdish movement actors became agricultural workers in order to get trust of agricultural workers and then organize them for developing claims about wage-increases (Uzun, Paşa, 2008). Almost all Kurdish movement organizations engaged in attempts of appropriating people in rural areas [*Köy Çalışması*] to get support and mobilize people for their political goals. In relation to this, Kurdish movement actors also developed solidarity-based campaigns for providing help to Kurdish people who had considerable loses during earthquakes happened a few times in the 1970s when the state deficiency at stake (see Kawa Örgütü Gerekçeli Karar, 1985: 49).

The fourth non-institutional way of social appropriation was using social rituals as political means for transforming social sites into political sites. Wedding ceremonies were turned to be an area of political agitation in which political speeches and cultural performances referring to Kurdish ethno-nationalism took place (Elhüseyni, Nurettin 2007; Yıldırım, M. Ali, 2008). In relation to this, funerals were also politicized same as other collective rituals. Selim Çürükkaya narrates efforts of the PKK members for participating to a funeral ritual as follows:

> A construction worker [originally from Bingol] participated in our seminars a few times in Ankara. He fell down from a building and died at the moment. We heard this event in Bingöl. As a group 16 people, we went to his village after walking for 4 hours from Karlıova and then buried the body together with those people in village. It was surprising for them; some of us were teachers and others were students who had come whole of the way for the funeral. Then we gave a speech there. We told reasons of why we [*the Kurds*] could not find jobs in our lands and why *we* had to work in metropolises without job security. We told them why they were depending on other people's collecting money for bringing the funeral of their son to their village. In addition to this, we told that we were revolutionaries and struggling for emancipation of our people (Çürükkaya, 2008).

It is not possible to verify that same non-institutional interactions between movement actors and would-be politicized masses happened in all parts of the Kurdish region in the same way. Nevertheless, it is evident that Kurdish movement actors attempted to enter in social networks and rituals for politicizing the everyday life that was unsurprisingly subject to variations from region to region.

In what other ways associations linked to the Kurdish movement did appropriate people regarding the *institutional* methods of appropriation and politicization? The cultural ground played an important role for both spreading political consciousness and also appropriating people as new recruits. The analysis of political magazines like *Roja Welat*, *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik* and *Rizgarî* shows that texts in Kurdish referring to cultural or political matters were published almost

in all issues. For the first time in the history of Kurds in Turkey, these journals introduced grammatical structure of the Kurdish language and published texts from the Kurdish literature which had remained under-developed due to denial politics of the Turkish state outlawing use of the Kurdish language. The Kurdish movement organizations also focused on the cultural activities such as forming musical bands, organizing theatrical plays and other various activities expanding cultural space for the Kurds (see *Özgürlük Yolu*, 1978, Issue [35]). The cultural field was operating in line with the ideological framing of the Kurdish movement and it was also an effective tool for recruiting new members for the movement organizations (Amedi, 2008). For example, "The End of Dehak" (*Daviye Dehak*) was about the emergence of Newroz myth, "The Smuggler Şaho" (*Kaçakçı Şaho*) was an aesthetical performance pertaining to border conflicts and DDKAD (*Devrimci Demokrat Kadınlar*) produced stage plays criticizing bride price practices which interpreted as a mechanism of subordination of women in the society.

Overall, various forms of appropriation methods emerged after 1976 and paved the way for new forms of collective actions in the Kurdish region. The Kurdish movement started to generate collective actions relying on the thesis of colonialism which were not yet transformed to the subsequent social movement activities. What kind of novel repertoires for collective actions were put forth in parallel to increasing magnitude of institutional and network-based appropriation practices?

The Kurdish movement activity took place on three axes; [1] those actions burgeoning from Marxist-Leninist ideology of the movement, [2] collective actions about Kurdish ethno-nationalism and [3] movement activities corresponding to the field of labor politics. In other words, main themes constituting essential elements of

the thesis of colonialism were put into action in a sustainable form especially after 1976. Newroz celebrations spread over the Kurdish region and also to the metropolises of Turkey, although it was not allowed to take place in some of the cities/town by the authorities (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issue [3]; *Roja Welat*, 1978, Issue [6]). Coincidence of celebration days of Newroz with "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" [21 March] could provide leverage for the movement actors to celebrate Newroz with official permissions in various cities and towns despite the arrest of organization committee members of celebrations was an expected outcome. Moreover, working class struggle in the region became more salient too. Plumbers, shoemakers, waged-laborers in agriculture, mining workers, posters engaged in various claims-making performances for wage increases or generated strikes for their rights (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issues [4,5,7], *Roja Welat*, 1978, Issues [4,5,7]). In addition to Mayday actions, most significant and crowded demonstrations were those framing against the power of feudal-elites in the Kurdish region. On the leadership of DDKD, two important mass demonstrations took place in Bismil (21 March) and Siverek (16 October), in 1978. M. Ali Yıldırım as a former member of DDKD-Bismil remembers the demonstration that took place in Bismil in the following way:

> A son of agha had raped a woman and killed her husband who was working for their business. Therefore, we decided to organize a demonstration against aghas [feudal elites]. I was in the organization committee and got official permission for this demonstration. We put speakers on pickup trucks, went around all villages and shouted "*Gelê me, Were Cem me*" [Our people, take your place on our side] in order to invite people to demonstration against feudal elites. Ten thousands of people joined into this collective action. For most of people, it was the first demonstration in which they had participated. During this collective action, we shouted slogans like "Damn to aghas", "No pass to Fascism", "Damn to colonialism", "Freedom for the Kurds", "Death with Slavery" in both Kurdish and Turkish languages (Yıldırım, 2008; see *Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issue [4]: 10).

This demonstration shows that feudal elites who were considered as collaborators of colonialists were not only criticized within the political journals, but also they were protested collectively due to their unjust actions against the people living in the Kurdish region. Another massive demonstration happened in Siverek for protesting "Colonizers and Robbers" due to the state security forces' not taking any measures after a series of criminal events happened in Siverek such as theft, abduction of women and extorts (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issue [10]: 10). It was 'deficiency of the state' which was framed with this meeting and the purpose was to make people question the legitimacy of the Turkish state. Regarding the demonstrations in Bismil and Siverek, the novelty of these collective actions was mainly the participation of all segments of the society, especially women and children (Uzun, Paşa, 2008; Yıldırım, M. Ali, 2008). Although it is not possible to claim that participation of women can be verified in all provinces of the region, institutionalization of the struggle against gender inequalities was realized within the legal extension of the KİP. Revolutionary Democratic Associations of Women (DDKAD) was established in the first quarter of 1978 (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issue [1]: 6-7). Societal structure in the Kurdish region and Turkey in general had been historically dominated by patriarchy was leaving very little space for women to engage in autonomous actions. Therefore, participation of a segment of women into mobilization should not be regarded as a trivial issue and noted as an important movement success (Uzun, 2008). Namely, the involvement of women and children into collective actions signify that mobilization was spreading to all sectors within the Kurdish society.

Overall, the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement emerging from within the thesis of colonialism targeted feudal elites, repressions of the Turkish state

and attacks of counter-movements in the second half of the 1970s. On that point, it is necessary to quest how contentious repertoires made Kurdish people to participate into these collective actions. The concept of "movement success" can be helpful for developing a sound framework for this particular mobilization years. The nexus of repertoires and movement success is delineated as follows:

> … the success of a form of action will significantly depend on its legitimating or delegitimating power. If the success of a given form of action is a function of its potential both for mobilization and for achieving the proclaimed goals, and if this depends on a movement's ability to present itself as a worthy actor pursuing a legitimate cause, then one can interpret social movements' repertoires of contention as a sediment of the forms of action that are best able to legitimate a social movement and to delegitimize its opponents (Haunss, 2007, 164).

When conceptualizing *legitimacy* as an analytical but not in a normative way, the success of the Kurdish movement in the second half of the 1970s was strongly related to ability of Kurdish movement organizations to attack on the legitimacy of the practices of the Turkish state and position of the Kurdish elites in the region. In other words, contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement framing the national and class-based oppression in the region targeted the legitimacy of the oppressors in the eyes of the Kurdish people. On the other hand, Turkish state's propensity to increase its repression after 1978, on both the Kurdish movement actors and the would-be politicized masses, continued to ensure enough space for the Kurdish claimants to struggle for decreasing the legitimacy of the oppressors in the region.

4.4. Contentious Interactions in 1978-79: Configuring the Interactions in the Period of Transition

The mission of the RPP government -established in 1978- was mainly realization of a multi-faceted restoration project composed of [1] re-consolidating functioning of state institutions and resources which were exploited during previous National Front governments, [2] softening class struggle within a populist framework and [3] re-formulating relations of Turkey with the international capital circles (STMA, 1988: 2365). However, throughout 1978, the RPP could neither substantiate this restoration project nor reduce political tensions which were at stake. New measures like austerity policies and security measures did not produce desired effects and caused RPP's loosing support of the politicized working class and also other leading socialist parties. In the last quarter of 1978, the RPP also lost its support from the Turkish bourgeoisie considerably due to its inability to re-consolidate a sustainable capital accumulation strategy and because of not being able to reverse the worsening economic parameters.

It is not wrong to state that both the Kurdish movement and other sectors of socialist movement in Turkey encountered with relatively facilitative practices by the state after the RPP came into power. However, regarding the anti-Marxist tendency of the RPP and necessities of the restoration project, it is not possible to claim that the route of change was a full-blown facilitation for the left-wing movement activity. In the period of 1976-1978, political polarization within the society and various state institutions had already created the crystallization of conflicts. In relation to this, for many times, demands of the Kurdish movement organizations for organizing collective actions were subject to refusals from the Turkish state officials. The analysis of the Kurdish political magazines shows that disallowing collective actions

on the legal ground occurred 9 times in the first half of 1978. Therefore, 1978 should be understood as an erratic period in which escalation in the level of contention occurred. Thus, while the so-called left-wing government was in power, the *increase of uncertainty* about the political conditions in Turkey deteriorated the level of coordination among the actors of similar camps. This triggered propensity of movement actors to employ political violence.

Understanding causes of radicalization in the Kurdish movement requires an elaborate analysis of 1978 as the year in which non-violent and overwhelmingly legal forms of contentious politics were dominant within the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement. Forms, directions and characteristics of interactions among Kurdish movement, Turkish state, people in the region and counter-movements are classified in Table 5.

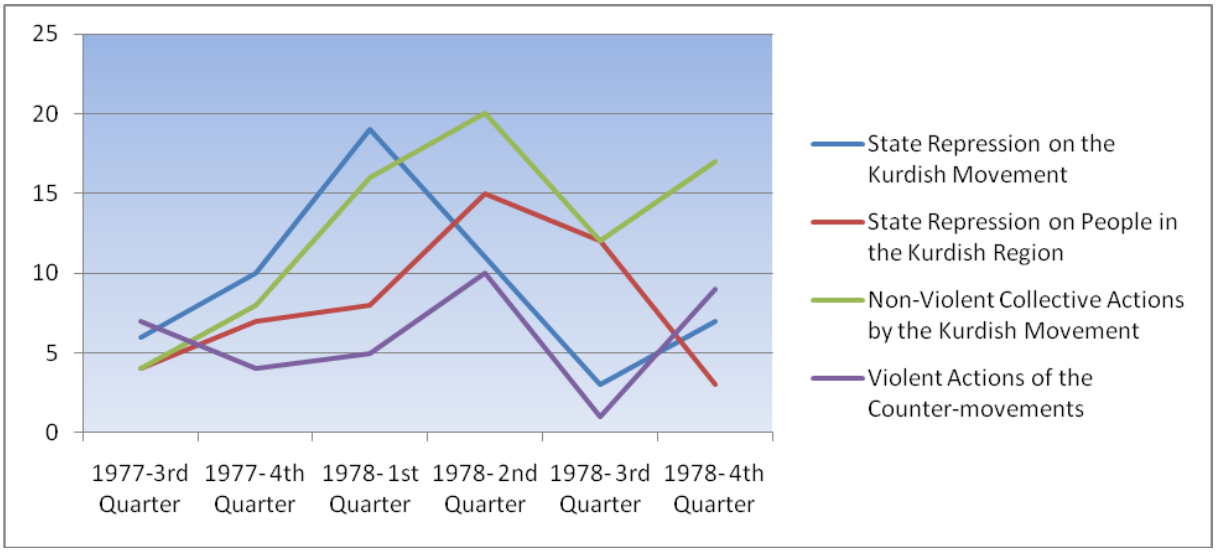
Table 5_ Classification of the Patterns of Interactions during the Mobilization Process of the Kurdish Movement

State Repression of the Kurdish Movement **[Turkish State → Kurdish Movement]**	[1] Illegalizing political journals, ceasing publications [2] Arresting movement actors before/after collective actions [3] Violent actions on movement actors: torturing, wounding, murder [4] Closing down associations [5] Disallowing demands for legal collective actions [6] Closing down educational institutions [7] Physical damage on properties of SMOs [8] making searches in SMOs [9] Firing movement actors from their official occupations or banishing [10] Facilitating actions of counter-movements
State Repression on the People in Kurdish Region **[Turkish State → People in the Kurdish region]**	[1] Repression due to border conflicts and/or smuggling [2] Arbitrary arrests, tortures, humiliation, murder, sexual harassment, beating [3] Security-related searches in villages and disarmament- related repressions on rural regions [3] Military operations [4] Selective repression on actors in societal conflicts or criminal matters
Non-Violent Collective Actions by the Kurdish Movement **[Kurdish Movement → People in the Kurdish region]**	[1] Protests against repression of state, counter-movements and feudal elites [2] Collective actions pertaining to Socialist ideology: Mayday demonstrations, commemorations on V. I. Lenin or the Bolshevik Revolution [3] Labor-politics: strikes, to stop working for wage-raise, resistances for collective bargaining [4] Collective actions about Kurdish nationalism: demonstrations on Newroz, anti-colonialist struggle, Kurdish language, Kurdish movements in Iraq and Iran [4] Solidarity nights, meetings, congresses within SMOs [5] Boycotts in

	educational institutions [6] Actions for delegitimizing presence of the state in the region
Violent Actions of the Counter-movements **[Counter-Movements ↔ Kurdish Movement]**	[1] Violent actions of the ultranationalist or Islamist movements against left-wing and/or the Kurdish movement: wounding, bombing, beating, murder [2] Counteractive events in which violent encounters with the left and/or Kurdish movement happened

The classification of interactions provides a general scheme for sketching what kind of relationships shaped the socio-political regime in the Kurdish region during mobilization phase. However, this classification does not offer a dynamic account and interactions need to be analyzed in the course of changing frequencies and implications of these interactions across time. In order to deal with this issue, Figure 6 provides how particular forms of interactions varied over time concerning the period that the Kurdish movement employed non-violent contentious repertoires.

Figure 6. Contentious Interactions during the Process of Mobilization in the 1970s of KM



Regarding the state repression on people living in the Kurdish region, repressive practices were generally committed by the Turkish military forces within a particular pattern of conflict regulation in the Kurdish region. Causes behind Turkish

military's increasing its level of intervention into political interactions were mainly on two grounds, in the Kurdish region. First reason was about the 'border conflict' pertaining to political changes in the Iraqi Kurdish region. Clashes between Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Union of Kurdistan Patriots (KYB) forces resulted with trespass of Iraqi movement actors from the Iraq-Turkey-Iran borders without any official authorization of these states and they also engaged in armed conflicts inside Turkey in June 1978 (Büyükkaya, 2008: 414-26). In this regard, the Turkish state started to prepare special reports on the border issue in August of 1978 (*MGK Basın Bildirisi*, 1978). However, although clashes ended in the mid- 1978, this problem continued to be on the agenda of the Turkish state until 1979 and became one of the justifications of declaring martial law in five provinces of the Kurdish region (*MGK Basın Bildirisi*, 1979b). After these clashes, the Turkish military increased its repression on the rural regions in the next three months in various forms (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issues [5, 6, 7-8]; *Roja Welat*, 1978, Issue [8]).

More importantly, repressive practices were turned to military operations named as "Kanatlı J-78" which was actually a military operation simulation performing the extermination of a Kurdish tribe in Hakkari, in September 1978. This operation was perceived by the Kurdish movement organizations as a practice of massacre to be pursued against the Kurdish people due to the increasing mobilization (*Devrimci Demokrat Gençlik*, 1978, Issues [7-8]; *Roja Welat*, 1978, Issue [10]). Rather than the causality behind this operation, its implications on the perceptions of Kurdish movement organizations are more important. The operation was symbolizing suppression of a rebellion raised by Kurdish people and it was publicized extensively in the Turkish national mass media as "a success". The operation was perceived by the Kurdish movement organizations nothing other than

a state threat warning Kurds about the bloody end of a possible rebellion. Therefore, radicalization of Kurdish movement's contentious repertoire can not be understood independently from impacts threats and repressive practices of the Turkish state. In other words, during the process of *mobilization*, persistence of *repression* as another crucial mechanism leading to escalation of contention should be indicated as one of the reasons of radicalization followed by a new repression regime by the advent of martial law which prevented most of the organized collective actions.

While mobilization happened with calls for an anti-colonial struggle from within an anti-system framing, trying to remain in the legal ground and thus achieving a mobilization via non-violent collective claims-making performances did not produce noteworthy changes. In other words, the political influence generated by the Kurdish movement was limited in the sense of not being able to decrease the level of repression and/or increasing level of mobilization considerably. Denial politics on the Kurdishness and non-recognition of the Kurdish identity continued during this process of radicalization. Any of the political parties in the Kurdish movement principally denied use of political violence as a means of making the national liberation come true. However, the main strategy employed by the political parties, except the PKK, was to realize a certain level of mobilization before applying armed struggle. In other words, the radicalization of contentious repertoire was considered to be a future phase to be pursued after mass mobilization process would take place. Therefore, the non-violent mobilization process (1977-1978) witnessed the struggle of illegal Marxist political parties on the legal field in order to create a certain level of mobilization. The legitimization of the armed struggle for national liberation was embedded within the thesis of colonialism. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the reason of emergence and spread of political violence is its

being in the minds of movement actors. The political environmental factors had still not closed ways of nonviolent collective actions until 1979. Overall, it would be deterministic to claim that the framing of the Kurdish movement directly caused radicalization of the contentious repertoire. The framing provided a source of legitimization for the armed struggle and but facilitated employing political violence after level of democracy decreased in the regime. Overall, there is need for a more relational approach taking into account all related interactions to understand the reasons of radicalization in the Kurdish movement.

In addition to repression of the state on the collective actions, what other factors led to the radicalization of the Kurdish movement during the mobilization process? First, the increasing level of repression had specific impacts on the Kurdish movement organizations such as causing the emergence of a crisis of tactic and strategy as a result of not being able to create a political significance. In addition to this, problems related to meso-level factors must be analyzed together with the interactions of movement actors with the would-be politicisized masses.

At first, during the mobilization process, some of movement organizations experienced organizational divisions that resulted with the emergence of new political bodies. *Rizgarî* was divided in two camps in December 1978 and *Ala Rizgarî* emerged (Rizgarî Dava Dosyası, 1981: 54) as a result of competition for power within Rizgarî about the methods to be used for fueling mobilization (Güçlü, 2008). *Kawa* faced with first factionalization in December 1977 and thus, *Denge Kawa* and *Kawa-Red* emerged (Kawa Dava Dosyası, 1985: 50-51). Ideological tendency of Marxist political parties was generally shaped on the basis of different interpretations of adopting certain set of principles and strategic-tactical assets from true examples of Marxist revolutions over the world (Russian, Chinese and Cuban

Revolutions). However, the main reason behind divisions within the Kurdish movement organizations was not the ideological differences on intra-organizational basis. Rather, it was about inability to generate political influence and not being able to further the popular mobilization (Uzun, 2008; Elhuseyni, 2008).

Secondly, mobilization process also witnessed to a gap between nonviolent methods of struggle used and radical goals in the agenda of the movement. That means some segments of masses [especially rural people] were reluctant about whether the nonviolent ways of struggle would create a political significance for the political environmental dynamics bounding the Kurds. Namely, the degree of mobilization was bounded with certain factors affecting the tendency of people to support or participate in the cause of Kurdish movement. Hüseyin Topgider, as one of the former members of the PKK narrates the dynamics keeping people away from joining into the struggle in this way:

> We had gone to a village in Elazığ for distributing our pamphlets. A peasant man took our pamphlet, read it then started to laugh. He said:"You have written here that the state and gendarmerie are oppressing us [the Kurds], they are not letting us to speak and we are also poor. We already live these things, why it is a need to explain all of these to us?" And he also asked whether we had power to organize Kurds. The successive oppression of uprisings that emerged during Republican period caused a feeling of powerlessness among Kurds. Either around a tribal leader or a sheikh, they had constituted an organized power for a challenge. But why did they lose? Because they did not have enough power. They [Kurdish people] were aware of this fact (Topgider, 2008).

Repression on the Kurdish identity which had a historical baggage and thus seriously affected perceptions of the Kurdish people. In this regard, according to this perception -which also influenced the attitude of masses toward the movement-, struggling against the state would require to use its language [violence]. Factors limiting the mobilization of the Kurds did not merely appear about state repression.

Class conflicts embedded within the Kurdish society also constituted formidable barriers limiting the extent that social appropriation would go with nonviolent methods. To lead a considerable change in the socio-economic structure of the region was a matter of the long-run for Kurdish movement organizations. However, in short-run, the use of violent tactics by Kurdish movement organizations would make the Kurdish masses to think that changes about their real-life matters and alterations in power relations within the region would be possible. Overall, structural factors, which would be changed in the long-run, on the realm of political interactions [i.e. repression] and those in the sphere of socio-economic relations [i.e. unequal land distribution] posed serious challenges against the Kurdish movement actors. To deal with this challenge, using political violence was one of the ways for protecting and furthering the support of the people to the Kurdish movement .

Paşa Uzun who was a former member of KİP/DDKD and also working in Siverek, Urfa narrates the challenge of social factors constraining participation of people into the movement and the crisis of strategy and tactic in the following way:

> This situation started in all political parties after a while. Started in the TKSP, KUK and also KAWA. Because there was a great acceleration in terms of spread of consciousness. The number of people taking place in the revolutionary side was increasing in the course of time. Of course, these people also brought their problems and conflicts into the struggle. For example, peasants were coming and stating that "I want to help you, I am on your side", however they were bringing their issues too. So what was their matter? It was land or property. Moreover, he [the peasant] may have had a societal problem with another tribe or the issue was about abduction of a woman. You have to solve this question, if not, he would stay away from you. In order to solve these disagreements, you need to have a certain power. We did not have it. We were young, working with a particular framework which was democratic. Namely, we did not have a position to interfere in their problems practically. Therefore, we let our political party [the KİP] to know about the situation. We told them about these demands posed by peasants and stated that "*We can not interfere into the questions with disregarding our framework. You, as the political party, need to find a*

> *solution about how to intervene in these questions. We have to take into account conflicts among stratas of society. We need to develop proper ways of putting people into our side*". I guess our party did not have such capabilities. Their ideological performance was not enough and did not offer us a perspective that would include necessary ways, tools and methods to be used. Neither on theoretical nor on practical grounds, they could come up with a solution (Uzun, 2008).

Demands coming from various segments of society were pertaining to structural matters which would not be changed in short run. Especially in cities like Siverek, the socio-political power of feudal elites was quite influential for protecting and reproducing different forms of existing social inequalities. That is why leading a transformation about land distribution or changing mode of property ownership was not a matter to be resolved in a short period of time.[33] Thinking that Siverek was going to be one of the cities in which hundreds of people died due to armed clashes between feudal elites and Kurdish movement actors (PKK per se), Uzun's experiences in Siverek sheds light on how effective nonviolent methods could not suffice to continue and further support of the masses to the movement organizations.

Analyzing other dynamics that created a fertile political environment for the introduction of organized political violence to the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement is also necessary. A crucial dynamic shaping the radicalization of the Kurdish movement emerged as an outcome of organized political violence posed by the counter-movements actors. In 1978, after the governing power in Turkey changed in favor of the RPP, the strategy of the counter-movements to dominate political environment also changed. The change in counter-movement strategy was behind large-scale collective violence practices [even pogroms] committed by the

[33] During the mobilization phase of Kurdish movement, the source of the organizational-strategic matters was strongly correlated with the fact that goals framed by the Kurdish movement (establishing a socialist Kurdistan) were pertaining to changes in longer-term factors concerning movement actors' ability to affect their political environment (see Goodwin and Jasper, 2004).

fascist movement in Maraş, Malatya, Elazığ, Sivas and Aksaray-Niğde (STMA, 1988: 2337).

> After March 1978, the fascist movement started to adopt a more sophisticated program of action while defining a new strategy for gaining power in addition to its previous political experiences. This was to mobilize a large societal base from the right-wing political spectrum -in which consolidation of its hegemony could be possible- regarding the increasing anti-communist violence inscribed within polarization of society, under the persistence of communism/anti-communism dichotomy. Therefore, the strategy of fascists was to trigger socio-political tensions ceaselessly and in this regard, without being reluctant about waging an internal war perspective at the end point of this planned process (My Translation, STMA, 1988: 2326).

The strategy of increasing the magnitude of collective violence also included creating political environments which would force governments to declare a martial law to make activities of the leftist movement to be ceased with repression.

The Kurdish movement had also started to pose counter organized violence after the counter-movement attacks took place in 1978. After the Kurdish movement started to respond to the counter-movement attacks with using political violence, the result was the retreat of counter-movements from some of the cities, especially in Bingöl (*Roja Welat*, 1978, Issue [8]: 14). On that point, to understand how interactions of the Kurdish movement actors with the violent actions of count-movements changed the dynamic of contention in 1978, it is necessary to analyze how the Kurdish movement employed organized political violence as a reaction. Selim Çürükkaya, one of the members of PKK narrates his experience about this transformation in Bingol as follows:

> MHP started to kill people [in Bingöl]. When they began pursuing these activities, a wave of fear appeared among people then became the dominant pattern at the left-wing. This was a turning point. Nobody started to care for our propaganda. Think that, the MHP is killing people then you go and say to people that you are going to build Kurdistan; they would mock you. On

> that point, you would have only one way. Thus, we employed violence. In this way, we gained control over Bingöl. The TKSP, which was the dominant power before, left Bingöl to go to Diyarbakır because of not employing violence… Thereafter, [after PKK's using violence], the people [in Bingöl] started to gain courage. A group people who were acquiesced with violence and not able to downgrade this repression with words [speaking-discussing], could rapidly trespass to the side of violence in case of believing that violence would tackle with the repression (Çürükkaya, 2008).

The use of political violence against counter-movements made the Kurdish movement actors to prevail in competition for power, especially in the eyes of masses.

It is not surprising that primary cadres of the PKK were sent to Elazığ, Gaziantep, Tunceli and Bingöl where violent encounters with counter-movements were the dominant form of contentious interaction (Topgider, Hüseyin, 2008; PKK Dava Dosyası: 1984, 50). In other words, PKK could find a base for its strategy of pursuing armed struggle in these cities where the violent clashes were about to dominate the contentious repertoire of the collective actions. The PKK's developing initial cadres could be possible in these cities while organized forms of political violence was not salient in majority of the cities in the Kurdish region. On that point, questioning how organized political violence was imported into the Kurdish region will be enlightening. Grasping the dynamics of radicalization in the Kurdish movement during the years of 1979-1980 requires a detailed examination of the ways in which the martial law limited contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement organizations.

4.5. The Advent of Martial Law Regime: Impacts of Decreasing Level of Democracy on the Kurdish Movement

Understanding the impact of the changing political environment on the flow of Kurdish movement requires delineating how the level of democracy decreased in the socio-political regime of Turkey, more drastically in some cities where the fascist attacks continued. Political interactions in 1978 finally resulted with RPP's announcing a martial law for 13 cities in December, 26 - just after the massacre committed by fascists in Maraş. Those cities subjected to martial law, at first wave of legally recognized military intervention were "Adana, Ankara, Bingöl, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, Gaziantep, İstanbul, Kahramanmaraş, Kars, Malatya, Sivas and Urfa" (*MGK Basın Bildirisi*, 1979a). Excluding metropolises of Turkey, some of remaining cities were in which Alevi-Sunni conflict was at stake and other cities were provinces in which fascist movement had selected for creating a mobilization in the Kurdish region, since 1976.[34] After four months, a new wave of martial law was declared in five cities and all of them were located in the Kurdish region. Those cities subjected to jurisdiction of martial law in 26 April, 1979 were Tunceli, Diyarbakır, Siirt, Adıyaman, Mardin and Hakkari (*MGK Basın Bildirisi*, 1979b).

The meaning of martial law was simply transfer of the conduct of all security measures to the military forces to an almost unlimited extent. The martial law commandership was allowed to implement an array of practices as follows: the right of making searches in all kinds of institutions and private spaces, the right of censoring all kinds of written or other forms of communication and preventing their

[34] Urfa requires a special attention not fitting in both of two patterns. While the fascist movement was not that much active in Urfa, the PKK had started armed propaganda campaigns especially in towns of Urfa such as Hilvan and Siverek, in 1978. The PKK effect can be considered a factor for pushing Turkish state to announce Urfa among cities needing to be governed on the basis of martial law.

being published, the right of prohibiting entry of suspected people into martial law regions, stopping or banning strikes, boycotts and slow-downs in addition to right of forbidding any form of collective actions and closing down associations (*Milliyet Gazetesi*, 27.12.1978: 6). In this regard, the beginning of martial law in the cities pre-dominated by the Kurdish population should be analyzed as a significant turning point for the 1970s of Kurdish movement. Until the declaration of martial law in the Kurdish region, political violence had not dominated movement activities and violent encounters were less dense. Thereafter, those social movement activities held on the legal ground were all pushed to the illegal zone.

Introduction of the martial law started to be influential in the Kurdish region after the establishment of the new military courts that resulted with the arrest of a group of Kurdish movement actors (Gümüş, Fethi, 2008). The main outcome of martial law was not only its ceasing collective claims-making performances or imprisonment of movement actors. Decreasing level of democracy and attempts of increasing coercive capacity of the state for repression deepened and surfaced strategic-tactical problems experienced by the Kurdish movement. Kurdish movement organizations had to adopt themselves to a process of renovation of their strategies for keeping the support of the masses and reproducing mobilization in the new political environment. Otherwise, the organizational structure of the movement organizations would become more prone to divisions or dissociations of movement actors.

A group of movement actors detached themselves from the KİP/DDKD and attempted to form *Yek-Bun* in December 1979 (DDKD Dava Dosyası, 2006: 161). Furthermore, *Kawa-Red* as a division emerged after the first split in Kawa went through another division in January 1980 (Kawa Dava Dosyası, 1985: 51). Although

the *KUK* was established in October 1977 after the transformation of the TKDP to the Marxist ideology by the young cadres of the movement, hesitations about this ideological position surfaced and kept creating regular organizational problems (KUK Dava Dosyası, 1981: 86-92). The increase of uncertainty gained salience - especially for the movement actors- as a result of rapid changes in the socio-political environment escalating ambiguity and thus making it difficult for leading movement cadres to determine certain strategies to cope with new change dynamics.

As mentioned earlier, the other specific impact of the martial law practices was to cease all collective actions taking place on the legal field was pushing movement activities to forbidden zone of interactions. Nevertheless, the most institutionalized movement organizations in the Kurdish region were still clinging to the legal framework even after the level of democracy diminished considerably. Kurdish movement organizations like the KİP/DDKD and TKSP organized a massive Mayday celebration in 1979 in Bitlis which was one of the cities not included to jurisdiction of martial law (see *DDKD ile Dayanışmayı Yükseltelim*, 1979). However, furthering mobilization in a legal framework was not much possible as it was possible in this case after martial law was declared and bounded politically active Kurdish cities. On that point, strategic and tactical choices of the Kurdish movement organizations about whether to employ violent methods started to be a crucial theme. In this regard, claims about strategic use of armed struggle after reaching a certain degree of mobilization faced with a challenge. To continue struggling for reaching their goals, the Kurdish movement organizations had to determine a new way of dealing with the new political environment. The level of mobilization that the Kurdish movement succeeded until to the second quarter of 1979 was very far from making movement actors feel comfortable about passing to the next phases, in terms

of implementing a strategy of people's war. Until the declaration of the martial law, except the KİP and the PKK, other Kurdish movement organizations had not seriously engaged in preparations for creating an organizational base that would use the organized political violence in their contentious repertoire. M. Ali Yıldırım, one of the members of the KİP states preparations in the following way:

> In 1978, we sent our cadres to Lebanon. In that period, we had relationship with Yaser Arafat. We sent lots of people there for training. They went there, got military training and returned back. Generally, we selected young people who would be trusted and also beneficial in future. From every town, groups of 4-5 people and nearly 100 in total were sent to Palestine (Yıldırım, 2008).

Although these preparations happened, the idea of exploiting non-violent ways of fueling mobilization resulted in KİP's avoiding to launch organized political violence campaigns in a pro-active way even until the military coup. Movement organizations like KİP and TKSP who were two most institutionalized movement organizations in the region remained reluctant about organizing violent attacks against the Turkish state forces or feudal elites in the region. Overall, making clear cut conclusions such as the martial law regime directly caused the use of political violence for all Kurdish movement organizations would be misleading. Agency of the movement actors: the way that they interpreted the political environmental factors, their level of institutionalization in the legal field and the character of relations they established with the masses determined their decisions toward using a violent contentious repertoire or not. That means a more relational approach is required to understand variation among Kurdish movement organizations regarding the degree of political violence they employed in the 1979-1980 period.

4.6. The Emergence of PKK: What Differentiated the PKK from the Other Kurdish Movement Organizations?

The core cadre of the PKK emerged within the university circles of Ankara in a similar way to political actor formation process experienced by other Kurdish movement organizations. However, PKK's coming into being was different from other Kurdish political parties in the course of its shared history with the leftist movement in Turkey. Former cadres of other Kurdish movement organizations had organic relations with the Turkish left-wing movements before the 1971 military intervention. However, the idea of standing on its own feet in a separate organizational line emerged before and during the advent of militarist regime and they started to form their own political groups thereafter. The emergence of the PKK happened after its former cadres had political affiliations with one of the most radical movement organization in the early 1970s of Turkey, THKP-C (Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front). This was not exactly an organizational separation from the Turkish revolutionary left due to core PKK cadre did not directly emerge from THKP-C's student organization ADYÖD (Ankara's Revolutionary Students Association), but out of activities held in several other hometown-based associations in Ankara (PKK Dava Dosyası, 1984: 48-49). The crucial point about the nexus of the PKK and the THKP-C is related with PKK's inspiration from ideological-tactical framework proposed by Mahir Çayan on the strategy of armed struggle. It is possible to find traces of strategies and tactics followed by the PKK in the period of 1978-1980, with a detailed analysis of Mahir Çayan's ideology on the revolutionary struggle which was actually a reinterpretation of revolutionary strategies that emerged within the context of Latin American guerilla movements and the Chineese revolution, in an eclectic way.

According to Çayan, in his own terms, *politicized military war strategy* relies on the armed struggle as central element in the contentious repertoire of a revolutionary party and other instruments of struggle must be subordinated to the armed propaganda. The main purpose of employing this strategy is conceptualized by Çayan as the need for using revolutionary violence in countries in which democratic rights and freedoms were not recognized. More importantly, according to Çayan, non-violent struggle against these oligarchic regimes would lead to a demobilization process due to its institutionalization within the system, in the absence of armed struggle. By the aim of preventing this, Çayan also opposed the use of sheer organized political violence which lacks supportive non-violent contentious repertoires that would provide support for the armed struggle and diffuse consciousness about objectives of the revolutionary struggle (Çayan, 1993). Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK, mentions that strategies employed by the PKK have been influenced from formulations of Mahir Çayan (Sayın, 1997: 75-76). Therefore, claiming that the PKK entered into the family of Kurdish movement organizations gearing the most radical political strategy would not be misleading.

In terms of the ideological framework, the PKK was speaking from within the thesis of colonialism. The main ideological difference of the PKK from others was their beliving that high level of repression and harsh denial politics of the Turkish state would only be challenged by the armed struggle. According to the PKK, nonviolent ways of struggle could be easily dismantled by the Turkish state. While offering a more radical strategy, the PKK positioned some of the other Kurdish movement organizations as adversaries due to their being pacifists. The party program of the PKK stated objectives which were acknowledging the thesis of colonialism. Nevertheless, the instruments to be used for performing its contentious

repertoire were new in comparison to others. The analysis of PKK's manifesto that was published just after its establishment makes it clear that strategy of the PKK was not merely strategic use of political violence like other Kurdish movement organizations.

> The PKK believes that progression for the people of Kurdistan in political, cultural and social grounds can only be possible in an environment of war; therefore, in all of its ideological and political activities, PKK predicates on creation of a nation fighting for its freedom and independence. In this regard, as a nation, instead of crumbling everyday and being destroyed within an environment of pacifism, PKK accepts it as a principle to resurge with the war and in the war (*PKK Kuruluş Bildirisi*, N.A.: 53; also in PKK Dava Dosyası, 1984: 53).

Using armed struggle was at the core of PKK's contentious repertoire. For PKK, instead of conducting propaganda for making people to participate into the collective actions, armed performance was coming first then propaganda activities were shaped over the violent action itself (Tekgül, Çeko, 2008). In addition to the strategic-tactical differentiation of the PKK from other movement organizations, it is also worthy to analyze perceptions and motivations of the former PKK members that will provide insights about PKK's entering into the field with the strategy of armed propaganda. While della Porta explains development of a radical identity, she highlights the importance of *justification for violence* which happens after movement values are enforced upon individuals (della Porta, 1997: 203). In this regard, in what did ways PKK members justify righteousness of their using means of political violence? Hüseyin Topgider as one of the former members of the PKK narrates the day when PKK announced itself as a political party in November 1978 as follows:

> I can say that all of us had comprehended that PKK was going to wage an armed struggle. We all believed that armed struggle would be the only way of struggling for independence and getting organized in Kurdistan. At least, we made ourselves to believe in this. Because we knew that it was not possible to discuss and read/write on all crucial societal problems in Turkey,

> especially on the Kurdish question, the most serious one. It was forbidden, you were not able to speak about it. Anything about the Kurds was subject to prosecution. Even if the state was not following it, local reactionism was ready to pursue this. Those actions which could not be followed and restricted by the security forces or juridical powers were being fulfilled by the MHP and other reactionists who were very well organized. If you were not in arms and had no power, they even would not let you speak. You could not even speak in a meeting or go to a village; they would gang up for oppressing you. This was something operating on its own way (Topgider, 2008).

According to the PKK, legitimization for the use of political violence was the closedness of Turkey's political regime to the Kurdish claim-making performances. More importantly, employing political violence was considered to be main instrument for creating political influence.

The idea of pursuing an armed struggle also shaped movement identity formation of early recruits in the PKK and differentiated members of the PKK from other movement organizations. For the members of movement organizations engaging in armed activities, the level of dedication to the particular cause has always been high due to the high-cost environment. Selim Çürükkaya explains the relation between members of the PKK and the movement organization in the following way:

> PKK had a difference from other movement organizations as such: Let's say that there are three students in Bulanık which is a town of Muş. When we went to Bulanık, we would hire an apartment called as the 'commune house'. Then start to live in commune style with those students or new people that we could persuade in there to join us. What was that commune life like? It is based on sharing things. Clothes, foods and books were obtained together and also used collectively. The person was no more dependent on his family. How could we find these things? Every commune was taking care of itself somehow, or engaging in robbery (Çürükkaya, 2008).

It would be misleading to claim that the PKK was the only party in the Kurdish movement having such interactions with its cadres and also PKK could continue to apply the same method of political actor creation after completing group formation process.[35] Nevertheless, while PKK applied these kinds of organizational interactions from the beginning since 1976 (declared to be a political party in 1978), the other parties such as KUK, Kawa and Rizgarî employed similar contentious identity interactions after transition to organized political violence in late 1979 and 1980. In this regard, main difference of the PKK from others was PKK's having a large cadre of high-ranking members circulating around the Kurdish region away from their hometowns. The specific effect of PKK's differentiation from others in political identity scale was its having more room for maneuvering when repression on the Kurdish movement increased. In other words, mobilizing its cadres in a high-cost bearing political environment was more fruitful political environment for the PKK especially after the martial law regime started. PKK's organizational capacity to raise political violence campaigns remained higher in that sense, in comparison to the other movement organizations in the KM.

Finally, there are two answers for the question of "What differentiated PKK from others?" Initially, PKK had a different ideological understanding about the Kurdish contention and it suggested that the rigidness of the Turkish state leaves no space for nonviolent methods and using merely nonviolent methods would pacify the struggle. Additionally, political identity formation in the PKK was different from other Kurdish movement organizations. From the beginning, since 1975, PKK

[35] It is not possible to verify that all PKK members were transformed to professional revolutionaries via entering into the party. After PKK could create a mobilization and significant political influence in certain towns, the magnitude of PKK-affiliated people was not quite high and especially mobilized peasantry did not need such a commune system in the rural areas. Thus, high-ranking members of the PKK in terms of having certain position in organization scheme of the party would remain as professional revolutionaries.

recruited its members for waging the armed propaganda campaigns and thus created a considerable organizational base of violent specialists ready for a high cost bearing struggle. The proportion of violent specialists in other movement organizations was much less in comparison to the PKK.

4.7. How Did Political Violence Become the Dominant Form of Contention in the Kurdish Region?

The mobilization created by violent repertoire of the PKK could reach a considerable level after the martial law was declared after the non-violent forms of contentious actions were discouraged. It is important to emphasize that the period from mid-1979 to the military coup in 1980 witnessed radicalization in the contentious repertoire of the Kurdish movement as a whole and radicalization as a process cannot be reduced to PKK's appearing on the scene with armed propaganda campaigns. Therefore, it would be reductionism trying to analyze the emergence and development of organized political violence in the Kurdish region only as a result of PKK-driven activities.

The salience of PKK activities increased considerably in the two years (1979-80) until the military coup happened in September and diffused over cities such as Urfa, Diyarbakır, Mardin and Siirt, especially in certain towns of these cities such as Siverek, Hilvan, Suruç, Halfeti, Bozova, Batman, Kızıltepe, Beytüşşebap, Viranşehir, Derik, Ergani. Nevertheless, the PKK can be labeled as a "late-comer" into Kurdish region in comparison to other movement organizations. Through the end of non-violent mobilization in 1978, most of the cities and towns had already experienced a certain degree of mobilization and the number of local associations had reached a noteworthy level as well as the number of appropriated central occupational associations and trade unions. In other words, movement organizations other than the

PKK had already institutionalized in most of the provinces and towns of the region when the PKK started to launch armed campaigns extensively.

In 1979, the PKK started its armed propaganda campaigns in an aggressive way by targeting three main actors in the Kurdish region: [1] feudal elites, [2] members of Turkish socialist parties and people affiliated with the right-wing [3] security forces of the Turkish state. Members of Bucak Tribe in Siverek were targeted and bloody clashes started between the PKK members and guards of the feudal elites which then continued for months and resulted in death of tens of people (PKK Dava Dosyası, 1982: 177-182, 196-197, 203, 210; *Hewar*, 1980, Issue [1]: 1-3). In this regard, PKK attempted to kill Mehmet Celal Bucak who was a member of the parliament from the right-wing Justice Party and the leader of the Bucak Tribe. Feudal elites in the Kurdish region as a specific kind of target were revisited many times by PKK attacks. In addition to the Bucak Tribe in Siverek, families known as Nasıroğulları and Ramanlar in Batman and the family of Süleymanlar in Hilvan were also targeted and many of their members were killed (Tekgül, Çeko, 2008; Çürükkaya, Selim, 2008). PKK's attacks on feudal elites were not a deviation from the objectives inscribed in thesis of colonialism. The use of political violence as another method of struggle against the elites of the region operated in a similar way to nonviolent methods. PKK launched attacks against feudal elites to ruin the powerful image of the feudal elites in the minds of masses and to show that their social-political power can be challenged. In doing so, PKK mainly aimed to mobilize masses against these feudal elites which was the case in DDKD's nonviolent campaigns against the feudal elites mentioned before. PKK also exploited historically settled rivalries among feudal elites and strategically used these rivalries for balancing struggles over power in localities.

Moreover, another series of armed attacks were launched against members of the Turkish socialist and Maoist parties who were considered to be spying for the Turkish state or working against the activities of the PKK (see PKK Dava Dosyası, 1984: 104-109, 124-132, 380-386; 1983b: 1310, 1332, 1352). Organized attacks of the PKK against security forces began in 1979 and continued in 1980 in an interactive way, in case of PKK members were arrested, imprisoned or tortured (see PKK Dava Dosyası, 1984: 137-149, 172-183, 389-393; 1983: 1310, 1192-1199; 1981a: 69-75). In that sense, PKK used repressive practices of the state as a means of legitimization for its armed actions. For example, as a reaction to the arrest of PKK members in Hilvan and Siverek, PKK declared "The Red Week" in April 1980 and a series of political violence practices targeted the security forces of the Turkish state via murders with guns, bombings and other forms of political violence.

The aggressive attacks of the PKK did not merely remain limited to feudal elites, security forces of the Turkish state and members of Turkish socialist parties. Leading movement actors of the other Kurdish political parties were killed too such as Bezmi Kaleli, Mustafa Çamlıbel and Ferit Uzun. Especially in the case of Ferit Uzun who was one of the leaders of Kawa, although the PKK member Emin Dal killed Uzun, PKK did not declare its role in this murder and then used this murder as a leverage by accusing the Bucak Family (Elhüseyni, Nurettin, 2007). More importantly, armed clashed between the PKK and the KUK resulted in the deaths and serious injuries of more than a hundred movement actors from both sides and continued for more than half a year (see PKK Dava Dosyası, 1981a: 67-69, 85-86, 19, 1981b: 28-29, 33-35, 43; 1983, 164-168; 1983b, 1209). How can it be possible to understand the dynamics of organized political violence engendered by the PKK even against the members of Kurdish parties struggling within the same collective

action frame? The main reason behind the PKK's targeting almost all actors in the Kurdish region was about its consideration of other movement organizations as pacifists to be eliminated. To be domineering in the struggle arena was the primary goal of the PKK [and also for the KUK to some extent] which is one of crucial tactics for movement organizations pursing armed struggle.

> The party successfully running the guerilla war initially will gather people around itself who were influenced by opportunist factions on the left-wing and will wipe out parasites on the left. Those elements –workers, peasantry, students- who minds were confused by the pacifists will come together around the armed propaganda. Namely, the armed propaganda will aggregate firstly the left. Those sincere movement actors who have been under the impact of other tendencies at the beginning will assemble around one strategy (Çayan, 1993).

In the way of revolution, the strategy of using armed struggle was also located as a method of unifying oppositional powers under a revolutionary party. In this vein, the PKK was not much reluctant about engaging in confrontations with other movement organizations and societal actors having capacity to use political violence. While the PKK was claiming to be the main Kurdish movement organization using armed struggle for reaching the goals stated in the ideological framework, its leaning to monopolize the spectrum of using armed propaganda was serving to its main purpose of gathering masses around itself. Therefore, a considerable number of the PKK's armed actions targeted both movement organizations like the KUK threatening the way that the PKK differentiated itself from others.

Is it possible to claim that PKK's strategy of armed propaganda could generate a movement success in terms of gaining political power? The PKK was successful in certain areas in terms of monopolization of the struggle arena. The PKK mainly relied on the propaganda of their armed actions but also used non-violent forms of actions such as pamphleteering, organizing meetings and seminars

which all together provided a degree of movement success in certain cities. In order to exemplify the support of masses to the PKK, it is important to note that PKK gained control of some municipalities like Hilvan and Batman via municipal elections while having almost complete control on trade-union activity in Ceylanpınar Development Farm that was employing thousands of workers (Çürükkaya, 2008; Tekgül, 2008). However, claiming that PKK could generate movement success in all areas of the region with armed propaganda is incorrect. Especially in Siverek, although the PKK showed that it is possible to challenge feudal elites with armed struggle, the result was not that much satisfying because counteractive collective violence dominated Siverek and turned it to an area of war (Çürükkaya, 2008). Therefore, PKK lost some of its cadres during these clashes, many high-ranking militants of the PKK were arrested before the military coup which undermined its organizational strength considerably.

4.8. Measuring the Extent of Radicalization in the Kurdish Movement Organizations

To develop a better understanding of the Kurdish movement as a whole, changes and perceptions of other Kurdish movement organizations is also necessary. On that point, the question is "What were the reactions of other Kurdish movement organizations against organized political violence campaigns of the PKK?" Ala Rizgarî perceived PKK's campaigns as an adventurist strategy that would harm the Kurdish movement as a whole (Güçlü, 2008). The KİP stated a similar argument by emphasizing that the condition for an armed struggle has not been saturated yet in the Kurdish region and deification of violence would seriously ruin the gains of the struggle achieved so far (*Jîna Nû*, 1980, Issue [3-4]: 32-62, Issue [5]: 154-164). In addition to this, TKSP claimed that some of the members of PKK have connections

with the Turkish state and these violent actions have prevented the development of revolutionary struggle (*Özgürlük*, 1980, Issue [4]: 3). More importantly, worsening conditions of the struggle against repression waves after declaration of martial law and increase in the salience of organized political violence brought three main Kurdish movement organizations together for coordination. In February of 1980, TKSP, KUK and KİP declared the National Democratic United Force (UGD) but this attempt could not become much successful in terms of creating a political influence (Yıldırım, 2008).

In order to see that radicalization happened in all sectors of the Kurdish movement as a whole during the martial law regime, examining changes in the tactics of all movement organizations in response to rapidly changing political environment should be examined. Radicalization of the TKSP -which was considered to be the least radical movement organization in terms of keeping its distance to employing armed struggle-, can be monitored with analyzing decisions reached in its first congress held on 3 February, 1979.

> Our party has denied a passive attitude against fascist and colonizer assailants and advocated mass struggle with developing successful instances of it. In this period in which state terror and fascist militias coalesced as a united whole, establishing committees and equipping them with weapons has become an urgent mission in order to resist against fascism (TKSP Dava Dosyası, 1984: 32).

Although this decision was taken during the congress of TKSP, to begin political violence campaigns in an aggressive form did not happen for TKSP while others leaned toward using armed struggle from the beginning of 1979 to end of 1980. TKSP acted in a more cautious manner while taking the rapidly changing political dynamics into account. Nevertheless, rather than remaining totally passive during the radicalization period, being aware of the upcoming military intervention pushed

TKSP to take defensive measures for protecting its organizational base. Kovan Amedi who experienced this process explains that certain precautions were implemented by the TKSP.

> Before the military coup, I had gone to Iranian Kurdistan, namely I had crossed the border. In those times, our party had foresight about the pending military intervention. Therefore, the action of the party was to get its cadres out. In total, from TKSP, the number of people crossed the borders was 54 which was not a big number. These were the people whose true political identities had been revealed. Our party had relationships with the *Iranian-KDP*. We participated in peshmerga camps, helped them to build watch houses (Amedi, 2008).

Unlike TKSP, Ala Rizgarî did not remain only with deciding to pursue armed struggle but also performed organized political violence. Beginning from early 1980, Rizgarî engaged in the use of political violence not as much extensively as the PKK but in an organized form that included use of guns, damage on property via bombing, robbery, setting fire to banks and enforcing shops to closing down for boycotts (Rizgarî Dava Dosyası, 1981: 63-68). Analyzing various political violence cases engendered by Ala Rizgarî shows that these actions did not take the form of a total armed propaganda strategy and remained limited either as addition of a new instrument into the contentious repertoire of Ala Rizgarî while the nonviolent methods of struggle were outlawed. Nevertheless, strategies of Ala Rizgarî about generating an armed struggle correspond to a larger extent. İbrahim Güçlü, one of the leaders of Ala Rizgarî states their struggle for increasing number and capacity to employ violence in this way:

> We reached a decision in late 1979 for building bases in Palestine, East [Iranian] Kurdistan and South [Iraqi] Kurdistan before the advent of military coup. In 1980, we made necessary preparations for this. About the moment of sending our friends [abroad], military coup happened on 12 September. We sent those cadres who were ready to East Kurdistan, South Kurdistan and Palestine. It was really hard to make hundreds of people getting out. We had relations with YNK in South Kurdistan, *Komala Marxist-Leninist* and

> *Komala Zehmet Keşan* in Iran, and in Palestine with *Salvation Front* at first, *Democratic Front* and *Young-Fatah* after then (Güçlü, 2008).

Radicalization of Ala Rizgarî was mainly an outcome of its' dedication to the use of armed struggle in a strategic way and thus believing that national liberation would not be possible without counteracting the Turkish state's monopolization of violence in the Kurdish region (Güçlü, 2008). Decrease in the level of democracy in Turkey and prohibition of non-violent collective actions after declaration of martial law affected Ala Rizgarî's contentious repertoire and triggered preparations for generating an armed struggle.

One of the most popular movement organizations of the 1970s, The KİP/DDKD started to concretize the strategy of people's war quite early according to others.

> Between 1976-1980, having alliances with various groups in Lebanon, Palestine and also Kurdish movement organizations [not in Turkey], our cadres went there with the aim of military training and realizing certain appointments and came back for continuing their struggle. As far as I know, three groups got training and came back. The last group, had training between May 1980 and 10 August, 1980, which is the date of leaving from Beirut. Every group was composed of 10 or 15 people and was selected from the party cadres (Tanrıkulu, 2008).

Namely, KİP/DDKD had started moving its cadres to Palestine in 1978 and 3 groups went to the Middle East before the military coup. On the other hand, Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of PKK, left Turkey in June 1979 and went to Syria and then called PKK members to follow the same way a few months before the military coup (Marcus, 2007: 49). Overall, some of the Kurdish political parties had succeeded to arrange the necessary political alliances for joining guerilla camps in the Middle East and thus pulling out their movement actors abroad before the Turkish military realized the military coup.

Kawa-Red, as one of the factions of Kawa, was another political party which truly experienced repertoire shift towards political violence. During the trials conducted in the courts of Diyarbakır Military Commandership after the military coup, Kawa members were accused of engaging in 36 events which can be classified as related to violent activities (Kawa Dava Dosyası 56-228). Keeping in mind the Maoist ideology of Kawa-Red, feudal elites in the Kurdish region became one of the main target groups of Kawa-Red and it killed people who were considered to be collaborators of colonizers exploiting the labor of Kurdish people. Beginning in the first quarter of 1980, the right-wing state officials from bureaucratic positions were also killed in addition to political representatives of right-wing political parties in the region. Kawa-Red also engaged in various spontaneous armed clashed with security forces of the Turkish state resulting in the death and wounding of policemen or soldiers as well as bombing houses of the police chiefs. Violent attacks resulting with murder were organized against people who were considered to be proving information to the state security forces against the interests of Kawa-Red. Extortion activities of Kawa-Red were mainly aimed to fulfill its financial or material needs and targeted state schools, financers of state institutions, the right-wing tradesmen and museums. Overall, Kawa-Red was one of the political parties which used political violence as an instrument for realizing their goals and rearranged its repertoire according to framing of the contention that also shaped persons or objects to be targeted.

KUK was the other movement organization experiencing radicalization with employing organized political violence extensively. Based on the events charging KUK members by the state after military coup, political violence campaigns of the KUK started in the midst of 1979 in Nusaybin (Mardin) with killing of people who

were considered to be spying for the Turkish state. In total, KUK members were prosecuted over 59 events in the period of 1979-1980 in the military court (Diyarbakır) which were events characterized with killing or attempts of killing state security officials, engaging in armed clashes with their opponents, extortions or attempts of extortion of money or property, killing and/or wounding members of other political parties and damages on property (KUK Dava Dosyası, 1981: 130-145, 149-153, 157-161, 187-204. 209-221). Two kinds of political violence practices dominated the repertoire of the KUK. The first one was extorting money from state officials or from people who were considered to be supporting the opponents of the KUK. Analyzing the content of these events shows that KUK members performed this particular type of activity for providing financial resources for their movement organization.

The second type of organized political violence activities corresponds to events that emerged as a result of organizational competition with PKK. Main areas in which the KUK concentrated its efforts were city centers and various towns of Mardin, Siirt, Batman and Diyarbakır, areas in which the PKK had also concentrated its armed propaganda campaigns. The beginning of violent clashes was related to the competition about trade union membership in the state-owned Ceylanpınar Development Farm (Kılıçarslan, Hamit, 2008). According to records of Prosecution of Diyarbakır Military Commandership, 12 members of the PKK were killed and 9 of them were wounded as a result of attacks organized by KUK members. Clashes between KUK and PKK continued about 7-8 months and ended in August (Hewar, Issue [1], 1980). KUK also engaged in tens of organized political violence activities against people who were considered to be in support of the PKK or vice versa.

The spread of armed conflicts from clashes among members of political parties (from specialists in violence) to their support groups is able provide insights about the level of contention. How can it be possible to understand dynamics behind armed clashes between the PKK and KUK? Organizational competition in this sense needs to be examined as a result of PKK's particular strategy for accessing to power -aiming to monopolize revolutionary violence in a particular space- coincided with KUK's showing no hesitation about using same contentious repertoire to that PKK employed. The result of these conflicts was simply a considerable increase in the level of organized violence.

Consequently, the radicalization process was experienced almost in every sector of the Kurdish movement in 1979-1980. Use of political violence became the main instrument for developing collective actions. The way of instrumentalizing political violence shows that targets of the claims-making performances did not shift but the method of struggling against opponents [Turkish state, feudal elites and social groups affiliated with those two actors] changed. In other words, armed actions became the language in which claim-making is manifested for protecting or reproducing their political power. However, some political parties like the PKK used political violence not only for reaching their claims to the masses. Instead, the purpose of using armed struggle was motivated chiefly with the belief of PKK in the armed struggle as the only method would create political significance for the Kurds and not waging the armed struggle was to commit pacifism. Otherwise, it is not possible to understand why the PKK also attacked other Kurdish movement actors.

4.9. Conclusion

Finally, the radicalization of the Kurdish movement in 1979 and 1980 was experienced by all movement organizations. PKK, as the main actor behind the

dissemination of political violence in certain cities and towns of the Kurdish region, relied on armed propaganda in which collective action comes first and propaganda of that action comes after. However, other movement organizations also experienced transformations either with starting preparations for the armed struggle or with employing political violence. This shift was not that much dramatic in Kurdish movement organizations [Kawa-Red, KUK, and Ala Rizgarî but not PKK].

The way that Kurdish movement organizations established themselves during the mobilization phase and their relations with their members influenced their attitude in the radicalization process. Therefore, for some of them, radicalization was getting prepared for an armed struggle, while it was employing political violence as the new language of struggle and engaging in no movement activity for others. In parallel to this, KİP, TKSP, Ala Rizgarî and Kawa-Red attempted to increase the scale of contention with moving their cadres abroad. This attempt of importing cadres was not only for securing their cadres against upcoming military coup. The idea of beginning armed struggle had been coded within the thesis of colonialism and when opportunities to continue phase of creating mass support disappeared, getting prepared for the new political environment emerged against the new threats.

One of the main reasons behind the radicalization of the Kurdish movement in terms of employing organized political violence should be noted as the decreasing level of democracy which made it hard to struggle with non-violent contentious actions. However, it would be naïve to claim that merely increasing the level of repression in last two years before the military coup in 1980 determined this outcome. For the Kurdish movement organizations, the 1979-1980 period represented high level of uncertainty about their political environment. While some of the Kurdish movement organizations preferred to remain loyal to the nonviolent

methods [TKSP and DDKD/KİP], some of them trespass to the violent repertoires [Ala Rizgari, KUK and Kawa]. However, the PKK did not face with a strategic crisis with the new political environment and tried to favor from the new wave of repression by launching armed propaganda campaigns.

The strategic-tactical crisis of the Kurdish movement organizations –not for the PKK- surfaced during the mobilization phase because the Kurdish movement organizations could not create noteworthy political changes especially about the state repression and the structural inequalities in the Kurdish region which would require a long-term struggle.

4.9. Linking the Kurdish Movement of the 1970s with Next Decades

The military coup in September 1980 was a turning point for Turkey in many ways and also for the Kurdish movement. The characteristics of this military intervention should be thought in line with the "neoliberalism-led military coups" which also happened in other parts of the world in the 1970s and 1980s, especially in Latin American countries in which a strong left-wing opposition constituted a major obstacle against neoliberal policies. The cost of transition to a new capital accumulation regime in Turkey was Turkish military's suppressing oppositional groups in Turkey such as the revolutionary left and the Kurdish movement via arresting movement actors and implementing sheer systematic violence on these people. Not only the Kurdish movement actors but also many Kurdish people who were considered to be linked with movement activities in the 1970s were arrested and most of them were imprisoned in the Diyarbakır Military Prison. With a detention period of 70 days, this prison witnessed death of tens of people due to tortures. Relying on the in-depth interviews conducted for this study, most of the Kurdish movement actors who spent years in this prison emphasize that it is almost

impossible to explain the level of violence and complexity of torture techniques applied on prisoners in the first half of 1980s. It is crucial to highlight that it was not merely prisons witnessing brutal repression, but also the region as a whole was under a wave of military oppression. While thousands of people were arrested due to being affiliated with the Kurdish movement organizations, meso-level dynamics gained more importance after the military coup and the ability of Kurdish movement organizations to keep themselves unified and their cadres motivated became much more important.

One of the main arguments of this thesis is that radicalization of the Kurdish movement happened before the military coup. Although studying the post-military coup period exceeds the scope of this study, it is still necessary to show how the 1970s are analytically linked to the 1980s. In the first half of the 1980s, the cadres of various Kurdish political parties who were located in various parts of the Middle East spent their time either for realizing the possibility of turning back to the Kurdish region in Turkey for an armed struggle or finding ways of protecting their links in the region. However, except the PKK, none of them could be successful in their aims. While the military regime was able to consolidate its power via using various forms of state terror and repressive practices across Turkey, turning back to the Kurdish region and even struggling for reorganizing was highly unlikely while the most laborious cadres of the Kurdish movement were already incarcerated.

After the civil war made it impossible to stay in Lebanon after 1982, the opportunity of using its lands for guerilla trainings became harder which pushed Kurdish movement organizations to a more vulnerable position in terms of complicating relations between the movement organization and their cadres. In this period, KİP/DDKD experienced a factionalization in 1982-83 and could not establish

necessary political alliances for pursuing an armed struggle, which then moved its cadres to Europe after 1986 (Tanrıkulu, 2008; Yıldırım, 2008). Rizgarî also experienced a factionalization and gave up the strategy of armed struggle in 1982 due to believing that practice of armed struggle would by definition require a dependency relation to the other Kurdish movements and also to other nation-states like Iraq, Iran and Syria (Güçlü, 2008). Although TKSP did not undergo factionalization, its cadres were transferred to Europe beginning with 1985 (Amedi, 2008). Some of the important cadres of Kawa-Red were killed by a military operation by Turkey in Qamislo (Syria), just after the military coup (Elhüseyni, 2007). Overall, the post-coup period that led to Kurdish movement actors to flee from the state terror of military regime and to start an armed struggle ended in European countries. This was kind of the beginning of the end for most of the Kurdish movement organizations.

It was the PKK that succeeded to form guerilla groups and to restart its armed propaganda campaigns in August 1984 after engaging in necessary political alliances with the Kurdish movement in Iraq. During the military coup, the thousands of PKK members were also arrested and imprisoned including its most high-rank militants. It was the PKK having largest number of cadres in Diyarbakır Military Prison in comparison to other political parties. However, sending groups to guerilla trainings from the Kurdish region to Lebanon continued - although some of them were arrested too- until PKK's getting decision of transferring cadres out of Lebanon because of the war started in June 1982 (Geçilmez, 2008). The main advantage of the PKK was to sign an agreement with KDP in Iraq in 1982 for provision of military bases to be used for starting and continuing armed struggle against the Turkish state (see Marcus, 2007: 69-70). Although certain organizational crisis emerged during this period of the PKK, it was possible to realize attacks against Turkish military

bases after August of 1984. After then, PKK's attacks continued with mobilizing Kurdish peasants throughout the 1980s and gaining support of masses in urban Kurdish areas in the early 1990s. In this regard, how can it be possible to link the 1970s and the latter decades?

An analysis of the content of PKK's main publication shows that the framing of the contention, which relied upon the thesis of colonialism in the 1970s, remained the same in the period of 1982-1985 (*Serxwebun*, 1982-85, Issues [10-45]). It is hard to claim that this framing changed until the early 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Therefore, it is possible to state that there is an ideological continuity between the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. In other words, mobilization of the Kurdish people under the leadership of the PKK via guerilla warfare strategy started and continued with the colonialism thesis. Moreover the, 1980s and 1990s can not be considered as witnessing a mobilization in which the emergence of new political parties happened in the Kurdish movement. Rather, PKK's being the main actor of the Kurdish movement gradually in next decades after the 1970s shows the organizational continuity is also apparent for the Kurdish movement in Turkey.

4.10. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations about this study is that interactions of the Kurdish movement organizations with the socialist movement in Turkey, especially in the second half of the 1970s, are not analyzed extensively. This is because of practical limitations pertaining to the need for spending more time and effort on the political journals of Turkish socialist movement organizations. Discussions and polemics took place among publications of the socialist parties about ideological differentiation of the Kurdish movement that gained salience after the military intervention in 1971. Regarding the inability of Turkish socialist parties to appropriate people and organization in the Kurdish region considerably in the second half of the 1970s, the significance of interactions between the Kurdish movement and the Turkish socialist arties is relatively low.

Another limitation is that interactions took place in the 1970s among the Kurdish movement organizations, Turkish state and counter-movement organizations are examined from the prism of Kurdish political journals. There is almost no systematic data about political developments concerning the 1970s, except the journals of Kurdish movement organizations. Therefore, the way that Kurdish movement actors perceived this period is analyzed extensively. However, having other sources which would provide systematic data and more space to understand how interactions operated in that period.

Additionally, some of the Kurdish movement actors with whom I conducted in-depth interviews were politically active. Therefore, their narrating of the past was influenced from recent political developments and their contemporary political affiliations. Although I tried to overcome this problem with taking their recent

political position into account, this may have created a problem of validity for certain contexts.

CONCLUSION

If one looks for a surpassing factor behind the existence of the Kurdish/Kurdistan question in Turkey, the denial of the Kurdish claims by the Turkish state would be the crucial dynamic. While politics of denial and the level of repression were subject to variations across time, it shaped most of the interactions between the Kurds and the Turkish state in the period between the 1920s and 1980s. The main project of the state's denial politics was transforming the Kurds into the officially prescribed identity of the Turkish nation-state with various forms of ethno-national domination and assimilation techniques. Therefore, making claims about the Kurds in Turkey, independent of the extent, goals and repertoire of these claims, was historically subjected to a politics of denial. This was regulated via legitimizations through a "legal" framework concerning the encapsulation of the Turkish national identity within the constitutional structure of the Turkish Republic.

The establishment period of the Turkish Republic witnessed a contentious episode regarding the Kurdish/Kurdistan question in which the repertoire of contention was dominated by political violence. The Kurdish movement in that period manifested Kurdish ethno-nationalism in their claim-making performances and opposed the Turkish state-making process in the region pre-dominantly populated by the Kurds. The Turkish state suppressed the armed resistances of Kurds in the 1920s and 1930s by using different forms of despotic power. After dismantling the Kurdish dissidence, the Turkish state, due to the lack of state capacity, was not able to increase its infrastructural power in the region that would enable it to realize its project of transforming Kurds into the officially prescribed ethno-national Turkish identity.

One of the main reasons of the emergence of a powerful Kurdish movement afterwards is very much related with the inability of the Turkish state to transform the majority of the Kurds by using *repression as a technique of managing the Kurdish contention*. In other words, for the Turkish state, variations in the form and content of repression were subject to specific historical conditions. However, from the late 1920s to the late 1980s, one of the main modes of repression was the method of *silencing Kurdish claims* by denying the existence of the Kurdish question, preventing discussions about the Kurds, narrowing down discussions of language with euphemisms and preventing the dissemination of Kurdish claim-making performances. Therefore, the emergence of collective actions of the Kurds was a major threat against the silence demanded by the Turkish state to regulate the Kurdish contention. In this regard, for the Kurdish claimants, trespassing the legal certification demands by using methods of struggle which were illegal according to the Turkish constitution was not a very unlikely outcome while denial politics persisted.

The transition from the single-party period to the multi-party regime created opportunities for managing the Kurdish region through co-opting the Kurdish elites via patronage mechanisms but conditionally. The word of 'conditional' here refers to recognition of the Kurdish elites *only if* they recognized the denial politics and subscribed to the prescribed identity of the Turkish nation-state via not raising claims about their ethno-national identity. In this way, the majority of the Kurdish elites was integrated into the system in Turkey and favored from this condition by re-institutionalizing their socio-economic and political power in the region. This change is crucial because of the fact that one of central themes in the emerging leftist

Kurdish movement of 1960s focused on the power of feudal elites in the region with the discourses of social justice.

The new constitution formulated after military coup in 1960 provided an array of democratic measures but did not enlarge the zone of toleration for the Kurdish claim-making performances. The militarist regime started a new assimilation campaign and tried to increase the infrastructural power of the state in the Kurdish region via proliferating educational mechanisms. On the other hand, the establishment of Worker's Party of Turkey created a *political opportunity* for the Kurdish political entrepreneurs for raising their claims from a legal-institutional way. The TKDP was established in 1965 with the support of the Kurdish movement in Iraq and presented an illegal channel for mobilization although it could not achieve a considerable degree of mobilization. The first movement campaigns in the Kurdish region emerged with the Eastern Rallies by the initiation of the Kurdish movement actors in TİP. A socialist framework was adopted in TİP to read Kurdish question from a perspective of social justice. But this framework was challenged by the TKDP members and local actors from a Kurdish nationalist point of view which lacked a political program. The main contribution of the Eastern Rallies to the Kurdish movement, in addition to its framing of state repression, was its diffusing the idea that the Kurdish region was exposed to a different socio-economic regime.

The emergence of the DDKO from within the Kurdish university student circles was a manifestation of spreading student radicalism across Turkey and also a departure from the idea of reformist socialism to revolutionary struggle underlining class struggle and anti-imperialism, in addition to using more radical methods such as armed struggle to achieve revolution. The DDKO did not specifically develop a perspective of armed struggle but launched effective political campaigns for

protesting commando operations by the Turkish military which were performed with regard to the Kurds' gaining autonomy in Iraq. Nevertheless, the T-KDP as a division of the TDKP emerged with the idea of armed struggle but ended during the group formation phase. Neither the DDKO nor the Kurdish movement actors in the TİP could generate a considerable mobilization in the region while the mechanism of social appropriation was still missing when the military intervention in 1971 took place.

The new militarist regime closed down the TİP and imprisoned the Kurdish movement actors which continued until the general amnesty for political prisoners in 1974. Changes in the governmental politics and the establishment of Nationalist Front coalitions created a reign of violence against the left-wing movements in Turkey and the Kurdish movement actors organized protests against these repressions. The most important effect of the 1971 intervention was its making the Kurdish movement actors' perceptions to crystallize the idea that the Turkish state would never tolerate the demands for the collective rights of the Kurds in Turkey. The new ideological framework departed from discourses of social justice and called the Kurdish people forth to mobilize for more radical demands. In this vein, *thesis of colonialism* emerged and claimed that Kurdistan is colony of nation-states [Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria] in which Kurds are living and aimed to reach the goal of realizing nations' right for self-determination with a Marxist revolutionary path in the Kurdish context.

Despite the fact that the political regime forbade the Kurdish claims on the legal ground, the Kurdish movement organizations, except for the PKK, employed a method of struggle by exploiting opportunities in the legal ground for mobilizing masses and by using political violence strategically after a certain degree of

mobilization is achieved. On the other hand, the PKK employed a different strategy than other Kurdish movement organizations by using armed propaganda which brought success in certain towns for the PKK but also brought serious damages on its organizational structure in certain regions. Moreover, the armed clashes between the PKK and the KUK was a result of the PKK's prospects about monopolizing the Kurdish movement spectrum with political violence and the resistance of the KUK to this attempt resulted in the death of hundreds of Kurdish movement actors.

Thanks to its eclectic composition, the *thesis of colonialism* was able to bring an encompassing explanation for most of the social, political, economic and cultural aspects of the Kurdish question. From the socio-economic underdevelopment of the Kurdish region to existence of the Kurdish contentions in Iraq and Iran, from state repression on the Kurds to the denial politics, the *thesis of colonialism* was able to offer an encompassing normative explanation for all of the aspects of the Kurdish question. Moreover, in addition to having a distinct location in the Marxist framework with a Leninist perspective, the *thesis of colonialism* also promised means of legitimization for the Kurdish movements' organizational separation from the Turkish socialist movements. Furthermore, concrete examples from Marxist anti-colonial struggles, which gained state power with revolutions in Africa and Asia, became a source of inspiration for the Kurdish movement actors.

The emergence of the Kurdish political parties/groups after 1974 started a set of interactions between the movement organizations and the would-be politicized masses via the mechanism of *social appropriation* in both institutional and non-institutional ways. Although the Kurdish movement organizations were not able to formulate strategies for creating a political significance and to respond to demands for change from the masses participating into movements, mobilization had increased

in 1977 and 1978 with overwhelmingly nonviolent methods. Three main components of the collective actions in the nonviolent mobilization period pertained to the praising of Marxist tradition, the Kurdish ethno-nationalism and labor politics. Thus, a question arises: "Why and how did the radicalization of the Kurdish movement organizations happen either in their contentious repertoire or in their ideas/preparations for the armed struggle?" To develop a plausible answer for this question, at first, there is a need to investigate which mechanisms operated during the mobilization period.

The mechanisms of *repression*, *social appropriation* and *downward scale shift* coincided in this period during the nonviolent *mobilization* process. Because of the increasing level of repression after 1978, the transition to the process of radicalization spread to all of the sectors of the Kurdish movement in different forms such as starting to use violent repertoires, insisting on nonviolent methods or launching armed propaganda campaigns. In other words, while the capacity of the Kurdish movement to generate movement activity was increasing with the demands from below, the closure of the nonviolent struggle field by the martial law regime triggered the transition to more radical methods of struggle. Therefore, the radicalization of the Kurdish movement in 1979-1980 was not only about the dedication of the PKK to the strategy of waging an armed struggle. In this vein, the language of collective action changed from nonviolent to violent repertoires for most of the other Kurdish movement organizations.

Tilly (2005) suggests that -under certain conditions- repression causes 'dissidence fragmentation' [split among challengers] and paves the way for demobilization. In case political elites act without a disagreement, repression becomes a matter of state capacity and of the ability of the challengers to respond to

the waves of repression. The Kurdish movement experienced this situation in these mobilization years. Although repression was present in varying levels before 1979, the division among political elites and demands of political parties for not leaving the political arena to the military significantly reduced capacity of the Turkish state to create a demobilization by repression. Nevertheless, the advent of martial law did not repress the movement activities in Turkey per se but mainly repressed those happening on the legal ground and, thus, the level of political violence continued to increase during the martial law period. In relation to this, some of the Kurdish movement organizations, during the martial law regime, started to transfer their cadres out of Turkey for preparing for an armed struggle. When the military coup happened in September 1980, the military had already accumulated a considerable margin for strategically using the discourse of 'ending anarchy' for legitimizing its intervention.

Overall, the idea that the military coup represents a break point in the history of the Kurdish movement in Turkey can be empirically falsified. Therefore, the radicalization of the Kurdish movement on ideological and tactical grounds happened mainly in the late 1970s. Ignoring the process in which the Kurdish movement experienced the transition from the nonviolent *mobilization* process to the *radicalization* process actually means to start the history of the Kurdish movement from a period when it reached the highest level of radicalization with a guerilla warfare strategy after 1984. Political and academic implications of this approach should be revisited in the light of findings formulated in this study which would enable us having a more analytical understanding of the causes behind the historical change of the Kurdish movement.

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